HISTORICAL
MEMOIRS
OF
MY OWN TIME.

PART THE FIRST,
FROM 1772 TO 1780.

PART THE SECOND,
FROM 1781 TO 1784.

By Sir N. WILLIAM WRAXALL, Bart.

Igitur ubi Animus requievit, non fuit consilium socordia atque desidia bonum otium conterere; neque vero agrum colendo, aut venando, servilibus officiis intentum, ætatem agere. Sed a quo incepto studio me Ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus, statui res gestas carptim, ut quæque memoria digna videbantur, perscribere: eo magis, quod mihi a spe, metu, partibus reipublicæ, Animus liber erat. SALLUST.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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HISTORICAL MEMOIRS

OF

MY OWN TIME.

PART THE SECOND,

CONTINUED.

1781.

JANUARY. — After having surveyed the members of the Cabinet, and the principal parliamentary characters on the ministerial side of the House of Commons, it is natural to proceed to the great individuals who composed the Opposition in that assembly. Mr. Fox, from the union of birth, connexions, talents, and eloquence, which met in his person, had become, in the beginning of 1781, confessedly, without any competitor, their leader. Having attained his thirty-second year, he consequently united all the ardour of youth, to the experience acquired in maturer life. It was impossible to contemplate the lineaments of his countenance, without instantly per-

ceiving the indelible marks of genius. His features, in themselves dark, harsh, and saturnine, like those of Charles the Second, from whom he descended in the maternal line; derived nevertheless a sort of majesty, from the addition of two black and shaggy eyebrows, which sometimes concealed, but oftener developed, the workings of his mind. Even these features, however seemingly repulsive, yet did not readily assume the expression of anger, or of enmity; whereas they frequently, and as it were naturally relaxed into a smile, the effect of which became irresistible, because it appeared to be the Index of a benevolent and complacent disposition. His figure, broad, heavy, and inclined to corpulency, appeared destitute of all elegance or grace, except what was conferred on it by the emanations of intellect, which at times diffused over his whole person when speaking, the most impassioned animation. In his dress, which had constituted an object of his attention earlier in life, he had then become negligent, even to a degree not altogether excusable in a man, whose very errors or defects produced admirers and imitators. He constantly, or at least usually wore in the House of Commons, a blue frock coat, and a buff waist-

coat, neither of which seemed in general new, and sometimes appeared to be threadbare. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that these colours, like the *White Rose* formerly worn by the adherents of the family of Stuart, then constituted the distinguishing badge or uniform of Washington and the American Insurgents. In this dress he always took his seat, not upon the front Opposition bench, but on the third row behind, close to that pillar supporting the gallery, which is nearest to the Speaker's chair. It was not till 1782, or rather till the beginning of 1783, that, with Lord North by his side, he first began to sit on the Opposition bench, technically so denominated in ordinary language. I am sensible that these minute particulars are in themselves unimportant, but they nevertheless approximate and identify the object. And that object is Mr. Fox.

His paternal descent was by no means illustrious, nor was the elevation of his family sufficiently antient, to shed over it that species of genealogical respect, only to be derived from the lapse of time. *Collins*, indeed, says, in his "Peerage," when treating of the *Barony of Holland*, that "there were *Foxes* in England before the Norman Conquest." But,

I have always understood that his grandfather, who rose to considerable eminence, and was created a Baronet by the name of Sir Stephen Fox, had been a chorister boy in the Cathedral of Salisbury, when in 1652 he accompanied Lord Wilmot to France, after the defeat of Charles the Second, at the battle of Worcester. It has been maintained, and I have heard it asserted, that their names were originally Palafox; that they formed a branch of that noble Arragonese family, so distinguished in the present age, by the glorious defence of Sarragossa; and that they first came into this country in 1588, when one of the Spanish Armada being stranded on our coast, the survivors, among whom was a Palafox, settled in England. I have, however, always regarded this story as a mere fable. Sir Stephen Fox, towards the end of a long life, during which he made great advances to honours and dignities, having married, became at seventy years of age, the father of two sons born at the same birth. These twins were both in process of time elevated to the Peerage; a fact which had antecedently been realized to a certain degree in the *Cecil*, as well as in the *Herbert* family, under James the First. Charles the First again exhibited it

in the house of *Rich*, and we have since seen it exemplified in the families of *Walpole*, and of *Hood*.

While the elder son of Sir Stephen Fox, was created Earl of Ilchester, by George the Second; the youngest, Henry, acquired a Barony in the beginning of the present reign, by the title of Lord Holland. He was unquestionably a man of very eminent attainments, possessing a classic mind, cultivated by study, adorned by travel, and illuminated by a taste for the elegant arts. But he is better known in the political history of the late reign, where he performed a principal part in the ministerial, as well as parliamentary annals, till he sunk under the superior ascendant, sustained by the irresistible eloquence, of the first Earl of Chatham. Of immeasurable ambition, and equally insatiable of wealth, Lord Holland was enabled, by possessing the lucrative post of paymaster of the forces, which he held during several years in time of war, to accumulate an immense fortune. It was not however attained without great unpopularity and obloquy, which accompanied him to the grave, and exposed him to much, perhaps to unmerited, abuse or accu-

sation. His moral character did not indeed stand as high in the national estimation, either in a public, or in a private point of view, as did his abilities. But he cemented the greatness of his family, by allying himself with the ducal House of Lenox.

Of his three sons, Lord Holland early perceived the extraordinary talents which nature had conferred on the second; and in the fond anticipation of that son's future political elevation, exhausted on his education, every effort which might expand or mature his opening capacity. But, he adopted a vicious and dangerous principle, in ordering that the boy should neither be contradicted, nor punished, for almost any acts in his power to commit, of puerile misconduct or indiscretion. "Let "nothing be done to break his spirit," said Lord Holland; "the world will effect that "business soon enough." When he made the tour of France and Italy, he was accompanied by a gentleman of eminent parts, Mr. Macartney; who afterwards, towards the close of a life passed in the public service, attained, himself, to the Peerage. We may see in the letters of Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole, what species of impression, Mr. Fox's

endowments, and the sallies of his juvenile impetuosity, made on the minds of the Parisians. They seem to have considered him as a sort of Phænomenon, which dazzled and astonished, more than it pleased or delighted them. Before he attained fully to the age at which he could constitutionally vote, tho' he might speak, in Parliament, his father procured him a seat in the House of Commons; and his talents, aided by his connexions, placed him towards the close of 1772, on the ministerial bench, as a member of the Board of Treasury. He occupied the situation about two years. This early association to Lord North's administration, might nevertheless be considered as an unfortunate circumstance, since it involved him in the unpopularity attached to various measures then adopted by the government, which subsequently led to a rupture with America. That even previous to his attainment or acceptance of office, he was considered by the enemies of administration, as a devoted partizan of ministry, in training for future desperate service, is evident from the manner in which "Junius" speaks of him. Writing to the Duke of Grafton, in June, 1771, he says,—" In vain would he (the King) " have looked round him for another cha-

"racter so consummate as yours. Lord "Mansfield shrinks from his principles. His "ideas of government perhaps go farther "than your own, but his heart disgraces the "theory of his understanding.—*Charles Fox* "*is yet in blossom;* and as for Mr. Wedder-"burn, there is something about him which "even Treasury cannot trust." These ministerial fetters did not however long detain him. The sarcastic mode of expression chosen by Lord North, to communicate Mr. Fox's dismission from the Treasury Board, is well known. "His Majesty," observed the First Minister to some persons near him, "has named new "Commissioners of the Treasury, among "whom I do not see the name of the Hon. "Charles James Fox." From that period, having enlisted under the banners of Opposition, and being aided by the misfortunes of the American war, he attained in the course of about six years, to the highest eminence among the formidable body of men who then opposed the measures of the Crown.

Pleasures of every description to which his constitution or inclinations impelled him, divided however with political pursuits, the early portion of life; and some of which, if fame reported truly, might have furnished matter for

a new "Atalantis." It may be curious nevertheless, for those persons who only remember him either as a leading member of the Minority, or in office as minister, to contemplate Mr. Fox when at the head of the *Ton*, who were then denominated "Macaronis." *Mason* describes, or produces him under that character, in the "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers," published, I believe, early in 1774. After enumerating with vast felicity of humour and Satire, the Asiatic diversions supposed to be exhibited for the amusement of the British sovereign, he thus concludes; I cite by memory:

"But hark! The shouts of battle sound from far!
The Jews and Macaronis are at war.
The Jews prevail, and thundering from the Stocks,
They sieze, they bind, they circumcise Charles Fox.
Fair Schwellenbergen smiles the sport to see,
And all the maids of honour cry Te he."

Neither the pleasures of refined, nor of licentious love, nor the social conviviality of the table, although he might occasionally indulge in each of those gratifications, constituted however his predominant passion. All his inclinations, from a very early age, seemed to be concentrated in a more fatal attachment to play. In the prosecution of that propensity, he had squandered prodigious sums before his father's decease, with which Lord Holland's

paternal fondness furnished him. To the same pursuit, or rather rage, he subsequently sacrificed a sinecure place of two thousand Pounds a year for life, the Clerkship of the Pells in Ireland; of which he came into possession by the demise of his elder brother, Stephen, in December, 1774. After holding it scarcely ten months, he sold it to Mr. Charles Jenkinson; and he disposed in a similar manner, of a fine estate situated at Kingsgate in the isle of Thanet. The office had been procured for him, as the estate had been bequeathed to him, by his father. We must confess that these scandalous irregularities of conduct, or rather vices of character, remind us more of Timon and of Alcibiades, than of Pericles, or Demosthenes.

Fox played admirably both at Whist, and at Picquet; with such skill indeed, that by the general admission of Brookes's Club, he might have made four thousand Pounds a year, as they calculated, at those games, if he would have confined himself to them. But, his misfortune arose from playing at games of chance, particularly at Faro. After eating and drinking plentifully, he sat down to the Faro table, and inevitably rose a loser. Once indeed, and

only once, he won about eight thousand pounds in the course of a single evening. Part of the money he paid away to his creditors, and the remainder he lost again almost immediately, in the same manner. The late Mr. Boothby, so well known during many years in the first walks of fashion and dissipation; himself a gamester, and an intimate friend of Fox; yet appreciated him with much severity, tho' with equal truth. "Charles," observed he, "is unquestionably a man of first-"rate talents, but so deficient in judgement, "as never to have succeeded in any object "during his whole life. He loved only three "things, women, play, and politics. Yet, at "no period did he ever form a creditable con-"nexion with a woman. He lost his whole "fortune at the gaming-table; and with the "exception of about eleven months, he has "remained always in Opposition." It is difficult to dispute the justice of this portrait. Perhaps we might add, that towards the close of his career, he emulated the distinction of an Historian; in the pursuit of which object, he made great efforts, and with a view to facilitate it, he appears principally to have undertaken his journey to Paris in 1802. Whether he succeeded better than in the

former attempts, posterity will determine: but he would certainly have attained a more elevated place in the temple of historic Fame, by imitating the line of Xenophon or of Sallust, than by taking Livy for a model.

Before he attained his thirtieth year, he had completely dissipated every thing that he could either command, or could procure by the most ruinous expedients. He had even undergone at times, many of the severest privations annexed to the vicissitudes that mark a gamester's progress; frequently wanting money to defray his common diurnal wants of the most pressing nature. Topham Beauclerk, himself a man of pleasure and of letters, who lived much in Fox's society at that period of his life; used to affirm, that no man could form an idea of the extremities to which he had been driven in order to raise money, after losing his last guinea at the Faro table. He has been reduced for successive days to such distress, as to be under a necessity of having recourse to the waiters of Brookes's club, to lend him assistance. The very chairmen whom he was unable to pay, used to dun him for their arrears. All dignity of character, and independence of mind, must have been

lost amidst these scenes of ruinous dissipation. In 1781, he might however be considered as an extinct Vulcano; for the pecuniary aliment that had fed the flame, was long consumed. Yet he then occupied a house or lodgings in St. James's Street, close to the Club at Brookes's, where he passed almost every hour which was not devoted to the House of Commons; and during Lord North's administration, Parliament usually remained sitting, with short adjournments, from November till July. That Club might then be considered as the rallying point and rendezvous of the Opposition; where, while Faro, Whist, and suppers prolonged the night, the principal members of the Minority in both houses, met, in order to compare their information, or to concert and mature their parliamentary measures.

Nature, besides the extraordinary endowments of mind which she conferred on him, had given him likewise a constitution originally capable of prodigious exertion. But he had early impaired his bodily powers, by every excess, added to the most violent mental agitations. These acts of imprudence had produced their inevitable consequences, though for some time counteracted by youth,

or obviated by medical aid. As early as 1781, Mr. Fox was already attacked with frequent complaints of the stomach and bowels, attended by acute pain; to moderate the symptoms of which, he usually had recourse to Laudanum. The strongest frame must indeed have sunk under such physical and moral exhausture, if he had allowed himself no interval of relaxation or repose. But happily, his passion for some of the amusements and sports of the country, almost rivalled his attachment to the gaming-table. No sooner had the shooting season commenced, than he constantly repaired to Norfolk. Lord Robert Spenser generally accompanied him; and after visiting various friends, they sometimes hired a small house in the town of Thetford, rose at an early hour, and passed the whole day with a fowling-piece in their hands, among Coveys of partridges and pheasants, for successive weeks, during the autumn. These salutary occupations never failed of restoring the health that he had lost in St. James's Street, and in the House of Commons.

Nor did the rage of play ever engross his whole mind, or wholly absorb his faculties.

Nature had implanted in his bosom many elevated inclinations, which, though overpowered and oppressed, yet, as he advanced in life, continually acquired strength. If ambition formed the first, the love of letters constituted the second of these passions. When he contemplated the extent of his own talents, and compared them with those of Lord North, or of every other individual in either House of Parliament; it was impossible for him not to perceive the moral certainty of his attaining by perseverance, in the course of a few years, almost any public situation to which he might aspire. In the possession and enjoyment of power, he necessarily anticipated the recovery of that independance which he had sacrificed at the gaming-table; as well as the means of recompensing the zealous friendship or devotion of his numerous adherents.

No man in public life ever possessed more determined friends, or exercised over them a more unbounded influence, though he was by no means as tractable and amenable to reason or to entreaty on many occasions, as the apparent suavity of his disposition seemed to indicate. Even interest could not always bend him to a compliance with its dictates,

nor expostulation induce him to pay the most ordinary attention to persons who had materially served him. In 1784, at the election of a Member for Westminster, which was very obstinately contested, Horace Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford, whose age and delicate health prevented him from almost ever leaving his own house, yet submitted to be carried in a Sedan chair to the Hustings in Covent Garden, to vote for him. But, no remonstrances could prevail on Fox to leave his name at Mr. Walpole's door, though he passed it continually, in his morning walks. *Hare* himself, who was one of his most favoured associates, vainly exerted every effort to make him say a few civil words to a lady of quality, by whom he was seated at supper in a great public company, met expressly to celebrate the success of his Election: a success to which, that lady, as he knew, had contributed by every means in her power; and who, as her reward, only aspired to attract his notice or attention for a few minutes. He turned his back on her, and would not utter a syllable.

If ever an individual existed in this country, who from his natural bias, would have inclined to maintain in their fullest extent, all

the just prerogatives of the crown; and who would have restrained within due limits, every attempt on the part of the people, to diminish its influence; we may assert that Fox was the man. The principles of his early education; the example and exhortations of his father, for whom he always preserved an affectionate reverence, which constituted a most pleasing feature of his character; his first political connections; all led him to the foot of the throne. He had tasted the comforts of office under Lord North, and his very wants rendered indispensable a return to power. Nor, whatever moral disapprobation his private irregularities unquestionably excited in the breast of a Sovereign, whose whole life was exempt from any breach of decency or decorum; could those defects of conduct have formed any insurmountable impediment to his attainment of the highest employments. In point of fact, neither the Duke of Grafton, whom "Junius" stigmatizes as "a libertine by profession;" nor the Earls of Rochford and Sandwich, nor Lord Weymouth, nor Lord Barrington, nor Lord Thurlow, had been distinguished by sanctity of manners, though they had all occupied the first situations in the state. Sir Francis Dashwood, who afterwards became premier Baron

of England, under the title of Lord Le Despenser, and whom Lord Bute made Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762, far exceeded in licentiousness of conduct, any thing exhibited since Charles the Second. He had founded a society denominated from his own name, "the Franciscans," who, to the number of twelve, met at Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow in Bucks, on the banks of the Thames. Wilkes was a member of this unholy fraternity, of which he makes mention in his letter to Earl Temple, from Bagshot, in September, 1762. Rites, of a nature so subversive of all decency, and calculated, by an imitation of the ceremonies and mysteries of the Catholic church, to render religion itself an object of contumely, were there celebrated, as cannot be reflected on without astonishment. Sir Francis himself officiated as High Priest, habited in the dress of a Franciscan Monk, pouring a libation from a Communion-cup, to the mysterious object of their homage. Churchill, in his poem of "The Candidate," has drawn him under this character, at Medmenham: but I cannot prevail on myself to cite the passage. Immorality or even profligacy, abstractedly considered, formed therefore no bar to employment under George the Third.

Fox's error arose, if not wholly, yet principally, from a different source. In the ardor of political opposition, stimulated perhaps by domestic wants of many kinds, finding himself so long excluded from office, and conscious that he was become personally obnoxious to the Sovereign, by embracing the cause and the defence of his revolted subjects beyond the Atlantic; Fox did not always confine himself within a constitutional and temperate resistance to the measures of the Crown. Mingling the spirit of faction with the principles of party, while he appeared only to attack the Minister, he levelled many of his severest insinuations or accusations at the King. He consequently obstructed the attainment of the object which lay within his grasp. As the American war drew towards its termination, he observed scarcely any measure in the condemnation which he expressed for the authors of the contest.

When the new parliament met on the first day of November, 1780, and it was proposed in the address to the Throne, that the House of Commons should acknowledge, "the sole "objects of the King's royal care and concern, "were to promote the happiness of his peo-

ple;" words merely complimentary; Fox rising in his place, exclaimed, — "We are called on "to recognize the blessings of His Majesty's "reign. I cannot concur in such a vote, for "I am not acquainted with those blessings. "The present reign offers one uninterrupted "series of disgrace, misfortune, and ca-"lamity!" Only a few weeks afterwards, in January, 1781, when the debate on the Dutch war took place, — "The reign of Charles the "Second," observed Mr. Fox, "who twice "engaged in hostilities with Holland, has "been denominated an infamous reign: but, "the evils inflicted on this country by the "Stuarts, were happily retrieved by a Revo-"lution; while the ills of the present reign "admit of no redress." He even proceeded to draw a sort of parallel, or rather contrast, between Catherine the Second, and George the Third; who having ascended the thrones of Russia and of Great Britain, nearly about the same time, had exhibited an opposite line of conduct; the former empire rising under Catherine into eminence; while England governed by George, sunk into contempt. In November, 1779, he far exceeded even the foregoing remarks, when he did not hesitate to compare Henry the Sixth with His present

Majesty; and to assimilate their characters, qualities, and the disgraces of their respective reigns, as affording the most complete resemblance. "Both," he observed, "owed the "crown to revolutions: both were pious "princes, and both lost the acquisitions of "their predecessor." The speeches of Fox, it must be owned, breathed a very revolutionary spirit, throughout the whole progress of the American war. Smarting under such reflections, the King began to consider the principles and the doctrines of Fox, as inseparably implicated with rebellion. From that instant, the splendor of his talents only enhanced the magnitude of his offence. His uncle the Duke of Richmond, who seemed to emulate the same distinction, and who indulged himself in remarks equally severe on the supposed interference of the Crown in perpetuating the struggle, might find pardon in the mediocrity of his abilities. But, Fox's fault necessarily inspired deeper feelings of resentment, and may be said to have eminently contributed to the misfortunes of his political life.

Amidst the wildest excesses of youth, even while the perpetual victim of his passion fo

for play, his elegant mind eagerly cultivated at intervals, a taste for letters. His education had made him early acquainted with the writers of Greece and Rome, historical, as well as philosophical and poetical. The beauties of Horace, Tacitus, Juvenal, and Cicero, which were familiar to him, seemed always to present themselves to his memory, without an effort. When speaking in Parliament, he knew how to avail himself of their assistance, with a promptitude and facility that it is difficult to imagine. Burke himself was not his superior on this point. So well had he been grounded in classic knowledge, that he could read the Greek, no less than the Roman historians, as well as poets, in the original; and however extraordinary the fact may appear, he found resources in the perusal of their works, under the most severe depressions occasioned by ill success at the gaming table. Topham Beauclerk, whom I have already had occasion to mention, and who always maintained habits of great intimacy with Fox; quitted him one morning at six o'clock, after having passed the whole preceding night together at Faro. Fortune had been most unfavourable to Fox, whom his friend left in a frame of mind approaching to

desperation. Beauclerk's anxiety for the consequences which might ensue from such a state of agitation, impelled him to be early at Fox's lodgings; and on arriving, he enquired, not without apprehension, whether he was risen. The servant replying that Mr. Fox was in the drawing-room, he walked up stairs; and cautiously opening the door, where he expected to behold a frantic gamester stretched on the floor, bewailing his misfortunes, or plunged in silent despair; to his equal astonishment and satisfaction, Beauclerk discovered him intently engaged in reading a Greek Herodotus. "What would "you have me do," said he, "I have lost my "last shilling!" Such was the elasticity, suavity, and equality of disposition that characterized him; and with so little effort did he pass from profligate dissipation, to researches of taste or literature. After staking and losing all that he could raise, at Faro; instead of exclaiming against fortune, or manifesting the agitation natural under such circumstances, he has been known to lay his head on the table; and retaining his place, but, extenuated by fatigue of mind and body, almost immediately to fall into a profound sleep.

Mr. Fox was not only conversant with the works of antiquity: modern history, polite letters, and poetry, were equally familiar to him. Few individuals were better instructed in the annals of their own country. Having travelled when young, over France and Italy, he had studied the finest productions of those countries, so fertile in works of genius, at the fountain-head. Davila and Guicciardini he read in the original. Danté, Ariostò, and Tasso, constituted the frequent companions of his leisure hours, whom he perused with delight; and the beautiful passages of which authors, as he proceeded, he constantly marked with his own hand. For the poem of the "Orlando Furioso," I know that he expressed great partiality. Nor was he devoid, himself, of some portion of poetic talent, as many compositions of his pen, which remain, sufficiently attest; though, for ease, delicacy, and playful Satire, he could not stand a competition in that branch of accomplishment, with his friend and companion, Colonel Fitzpatrick. The verses, or Epigram, written on Gibbon's accepting the employment of a Lord of Trade, in 1779, beginning,

"King George in a fright,
Lest Gibbon should write

The hist'ry of England's disgrace;
Thought no way so sure
His pen to secure,
As to give the historian a place;"

I have always understood to be from Fox's pen, though it is disowned by Lord Holland, as "certainly not his uncle's composition." I know, however, that some years afterwards, when his effects were seized for debt, and sold; a set of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall "of the Roman Empire," in the first leaf of which, Fox had with his own hand inserted the Stanzas in question; sold for a very considerable sum, under the belief or conviction that he was their author.

Fox conversed in French, nearly with the same purity and facility, as he did in English; writing in that language not less correctly, nor with less elegance. A man of his high birth and connexions, possessing qualifications so rare, independant of his parliamentary talents, seemed to be pointed out by nature, for the Superintendence of the foreign Department of state. Those persons who anticipated the fall of Lord North's administration, already imagined that they beheld Mr. Fox in that situation, for which talents and education had

evidently designed him. Yet, after contemplating the portrait which I have here sketched, and which, I imagine, even his greatest admirers will admit to do him no injustice; it is for impartial posterity to determine, whether on full examination of his merits and defects, George the Third may be considered as most deserving of approbation or of blame, in never having at any period of his reign, voluntarily called Mr. Fox to his counsels. If energy of mind, enlargement of views, firmness of character, amenity of manners, acquaintance with foreign courts and languages, facility in conducting business, and prodigious intellectual powers, combining eloquence, application, as well as discernment; — if these endowments are considered as forming an incontestable claim to public employment, unsustained by moral qualities, or by property; we must condemn the sentence of exclusion passed upon him. Those persons on the other hand, who consider all talent, however eminent, as radically defective, unless sustained by decorum, and a regard for opinion; as well as all who prefer sobriety of conduct, regularity of deportment, and the virtues of private life, above any ability which nature can bestow on man; — lastly, all who

regard judgment, under the controul of strict principle, as the most indispensable requisite of a minister to whom the public honor and felicity are in some measure necessarily entrusted; — such persons will probably hesitate before they decide too hastily, on the degree of censure or of commendation, which the King's conduct towards Fox, ought to excite in our minds.

If Fox occupied the first place in the ranks of opposition, Burke might be pronounced without contest, the second person in that powerful body. His extraordinary endowments of mind superseded every defect of birth, fortune, connexions, or country; and placed him on an eminence, to which no subject in my time, unassisted by those advantages, with the single exception of Mr. Sheridan, has ever attained in the public estimation. For it may perhaps be justly questioned whether the splendid talents of the first Mr. Pitt, would have forced his way into the Cabinet, unaided and unsustained by his alliance with the family of Grenville. Of years much more advanced than Fox, Burke had already attained to the Acmé of his fame as a speaker, and could not well augment the

reputation which he had acquired in that capacity. Perhaps, if we were to point out the period of his life when he stood on the highest ground as a public man, in the estimation of all parties, we should name the year 1781. His recent exertions in bringing forward the Bill for the reform of the Civil List, which had engaged such general attention in the last session of the preceding Parliament, continued yet fresh in recollection. Whatever opinion might be entertained respecting the necessity or the eligibility of those proposed regulations in the royal Household; only one sentiment pervaded the house and the nation, on the unexampled combination of eloquence, labor, and perseverance, which had been displayed by their enlightened author. They covered with astonishment and admiration, even those who from principle or from party, appeared most strenuous in opposing the progress of the Bill itself, through every stage. The very rejection which had attended many clauses of it, and the address with which others were finally evaded or eluded, had conduced to raise him in the national opinion.

While however I do this justice to his talents and intentions, it is impossible not to consider

with very different feelings, the splendid Eulogium which he made on that occasion, of which Necker formed the subject. Burke, in sublime and animated language, described the system of public credit adopted by Louis the Sixteenth, under the guidance of his Genevese financial Minister; which he depictured as the consummation of human ability, economy, and judicious calculation. Neither Sully, nor Colbert, he said, could compete with Necker: while the Sovereign of France, unlike his predecessors on the throne, who had recourse when in distress, to the bold frauds or plunges of bankrupt despotism, for raising pecuniary supplies; built all his plans on the firm basis of national confidence, sustained by pecuniary regulations calculated to pay the interest of the debt thus incurred. Such were the arts and assertions, by which George the Third, Lord North, and the American war, became objects of reprobation! If Burke really believed the facts that he laid down, what are we to think of his judgement! But, there is a holy mistaken zeal in politics, as in religion, of which delusive cup he had drank deep. The intoxication insensibly dispersed after 1789; and before 1792, he beheld Louis the Sixteenth, Necker, and their insensate, or pernicious measures, through a just Medium. He then

endeavoured to counteract the effect of his own orations. In 1781, the delusion subsisted in all its force. The unqualified condemnation which he had always bestowed on the American war, from the period of its commencement, seemed to be at least justified by the result of the contest; and in that sentiment he was then supported by a majority of the British people. When to the operation of these combined causes, we add the acknowledged mediocrity of his fortune, which left him in a sort of dependance on the Marquis of Rockingham; together with his long exclusion from office, and his unimpeached moral character, contrasted with the irregularities of Fox's conduct; we shall not wonder at the high place which he occupied, within, no less than without, the walls of the House of Commons.

All those persons to whom his memory is dear, may like to contemplate him at this point of time, when he appears most resplendent, as well as free from many of the weaknesses, inconsistencies, and infirmities, to which our nature is subject, and from which he was by no means exempt. His admirers will recollect with concern, the querulous lamentations, and unseemly reluctance, with which, in 1782 and

1783, he each time quitted the Pay-office, on the change of administration. They will remember the acts of imprudence and indiscretion, not to call them by any harsher name, which characterized his tenure of office, during the existence of the Coalition ministry; to defend, or to palliate which, demanded the utmost efforts of Fox's parliamentary abilities. They will probably admit and lament, his too ardent prosecution of Hastings, for political errors or trespasses, which, even though they had existed in their utmost extent, ought to have found their apology in the difficulties of his situation; beset with domestic and foreign enemies, in charge of a vast empire, and necessitated to find resources on the spot, against internal commotions, no less than against external hostility. They will reprobate with severity, his intemperate and indecorous conduct, as a Member of Parliament, in 1788, on an occasion when the country at large felt the deepest sympathy and distress for the illness of the Sovereign. And finally, though they will exult in the meritorious line of action which he embraced on the commencement of the French Revolution, as equally honourable to himself, and beneficial to the cause of order and government throughout the civilized world; yet

they cannot forget that he received from Mr. Pitt soon afterwards, two pensions for three lives, of eighteen hundred Pounds a year, each, as his reward: and they will Perhaps incline to admit, that on an impartial survey, Mr. Burke appears greater and more elevated in 1781, than at any subsequent period of his political life.

He was then more than fifty years of age, of which he had passed fifteen in the House of Commons. I believe, he owed his first seat in that assembly, not to the Marquis of Rockingham, but to the late Earl Verney, with whom he had formed some connections of a pecuniary nature; during the continuance of which, both that nobleman and Mr. Burke became purchasers to a considerable amount, of East India Stock. The latter, as it was asserted, sold out in time, after clearing so large a sum by the transaction, as with it to have purchased the estate or house at Gregories, near Beconsfield in Bucks, where he always resided when not in London. Lord Verney, less fortunate, or less prudent; though possessed of a vast landed property, was almost ruined by his East India purchases; and Richard Burke, Edmund's bro-

ther, who was then a practitioner at the Bar, being likewise involved in the same losing concern, was said to be unable to fulfil his Stock engagements; or in the language of Change Alley, to have *waddled.* Hence, in allusion to this circumstance, his enemies, instead of *Dick* Burke, commonly called him *Duck* Burke. Edmund, in 1781, rented a house in the Broad Sanctuary, Westminster, conveniently situated for his attendance in Parliament; but entertained very little company; and his pecuniary obligations to the Marquis of Rockingham, which were known to be great, sufficiently indicated the limited nature of his private fortune.

Nature had bestowed on him a boundless imagination, aided by a memory of equal strength and tenacity. His fancy was so vivid, that it seemed to light up by its own powers, and to burn without consuming the aliment on which it fed: sometimes bearing him away into ideal scenes created by his own exuberant mind, but from which he always returned to the subject of Debate; descending from his most aërial flights by a gentle and imperceptible gradation, till he again touched the ground. Learning waited on

him like a handmaid, presenting to his choice, all that Antiquity had culled or invented, most elucidatory of the topic under discussion. He always seemed to be oppressed under the load and variety of his intellectual treasures, of which he frequently scattered portions with a lavish hand, to inattentive, impatient, hungry, and sleepy hearers, undeserving of such presents. Nor did he desist, though warned by the clamorous vociferation of the House, to restrain or to abbreviate his speeches. Every power of Oratory was wielded by him in turn: for, he could be during the same evening, pathetic and humorous; acrimonious and conciliating; now giving a loose to his indignation or severity; and then, almost in the same breath, calling to his assistance ridicule, wit, and mockery. Yet, with this assemblage of endowments, which would have sufficed to form many Orators; though he instructed, delighted, and astonished, he frequently fatigued, because his faculties were not controlled and chastened by a severe judgement.

In his dress and exterior he was not less negligent than Fox: but, the spirit of party did not blend with the colour of his apparel;

and he rarely or never came to the House in Blue and Buff, though he eulogized Laurens, the American Ex-President, when a prisoner in the Tower, far beyond the picture which *Pope* has left us of *Atterbury*, under the same circumstances. Burke constantly wore spectacles. His enunciation was vehement, rapid, and never checked by any embarrassment: for his ideas outran his powers of utterance, and he drew from an exhaustless source. But, his Irish accent, which was as strong as if he had never quitted the banks of the Shannon, diminished to the ear, the enchanting effect of his eloquence on the mind. Dundas, who laboured under a similar impediment, yet turned it to account, if I may so express myself; some of his expressions or allusions, by the variation in pronouncing a single letter, or pressing too hard upon a vowel, frequently producing such an equivocal sound, conveying so strange an impression on the ears of his audience, as put to flight all gravity, and convulsed the house with laughter. In brilliancy of wit, Lord North alone could compete with Burke; for Sheridan had not then appeared. Burke drew all his images from classic sources: a fact, of which he displayed a beautiful exemplification, when he

said of Wilkes, borne along in triumph by the mob, that he resembled Pindar, elevated on the wings of poetical inspiration,

—— "Numerisque fertur
Lege solutis."

His personal qualities of temper and disposition, by no means corresponded with his intellectual endowments. Throughout his general manner and deportment in Parliament, there was something petulant, impatient, and at times almost intractable, which greatly obscured the lustre of his talents. His very features, and the undulating motions of his head, were eloquently expressive of this irritability, which on some occasions seemed to approach towards alienation of mind. Even his friends could not always induce him to listen to reason and remonstrance, though they sometimes held him down in his seat, by the skirts of his coat, in order to prevent the ebullitions of his anger or indignation. Gentle, mild, and amenable to argument in private society, of which he formed the delight and the ornament, he was often intemperate and even violent in Parliament. Fox, however irritated, never forgot that he

was a chief. Burke, in his most sublime flights, was only a partizan. The countenance of the latter, which rarely relaxed into a smile, did not invite approach or conciliation. His enmities and prejudices, though they originated in principle, as well as in conviction, yet became tinged with the virulent spirit of party; and were eventually in many instances, inveterate, unjust, and insurmountable. Infinitely more respectable than Fox, he was nevertheless far less amiable. Exempt from his defects and irregularities, Burke wanted the suavity of Fox's manner, his amenity, and his placability. The one procured more admirers. The other possessed more friends. Though acting together to a common point, as members of the House of Commons, and embarked in the same cause; their intimacy seemed always to commence, and to cease, at the entrance of the Lobby. Burke retired from the discharge of his parliamentary functions, exhausted, chagrined, and often irritated; to repair immediately to his family, or to the duties and avocations of domestic life. Fox, always fresh, and never more alert than after a long Debate, only quitted the House, in order to drive to Brookes's. Even in their

nearest approximations, there were always essential and striking distinctions between the two Opposition leaders. In genius, in learning, in eloquence, in politics, they were assimilated. But, in their occupations, amusements, society, companions, and modes of life, never were two men more discordant. They continued, nevertheless, to act together through succeeding Parliaments, in good, and in adverse fortune, 'till the French Revolution finally dissevered them. The obvious defect of Burke, was want of temper and self-command. Fox's latent blemish lay in his dissolute habits and ruined fortune, which enabled his enemies to compare him with Catiline. Both wanted judgment to perceive, that even under the free Constitution of Great Britain, the Cabinet, though it may be taken by storm, cannot be long held except by favor. Mr. Fox, in 1806, appears to have thoroughly come up with this great truth, of which, in 1781, he was either regardless or ignorant.

In surveying the Opposition side of the House of Commons at this period, the idea of Barré naturally and unavoidably suggests itself after that of Burke. Both were natives of the same country, Ireland; and both had

attained to vast celebrity in their adopted country, England. But, no sort of comparison could be made between their talents, acquirements, or claim to general admiration; in all which, Burke possessed an infinite superiority. Of an athletic frame and mould, endowed with extraordinary powers of voice, Barré, as a speaker, roughly enforced, rather than solicited or attracted attention. Severe, and sometimes coarse in his censures or accusations, he nevertheless always sustained his charges against Ministers, however strong, with considerable force of argument and language. Slow, measured, and dictatorial in his manner of enunciation, he was not carried away by those beautiful digressions of genius or fancy, with which Burke captivated and entertained his audience. Master nevertheless of his subject, and more attentive than Burke, not to fatigue the patience of the House, when eager to rise, he frequently obtained a more indulgent hearing. Deprived already of one eye, and menaced with a privation of both; advanced in years, grey-headed, and of a savage aspect, he reminded the beholders when he rose, of Belisarius, rather than of Tully. Yet possessing a cultivated understanding, conversant with the works of

antiquity, and able on occasion to press them into his service, he sometimes displayed a great diversity of information.

Near him, on the same Bench, in the front ranks of the Minority, usually sat his friend and colleague, Dunning. Never perhaps did nature enclose a more illuminated mind, in a body of meaner and more abject appearance. It is difficult to do justice to the peculiar species of ugliness which characterized his person and figure, though he did not labor under any absolute deformity of shape or limb. A degree of infirmity, and almost of debility or decay in his organs, augmented the effect of his other bodily misfortunes. Even his voice was so husky and choaked with phlegm, that it refused utterance to the sentiments which were dictated by his superior intelligence. In consequence of this physical impediment, he lay always under a necessity of involuntarily announcing his intention to address the House, some time before he actually rose, by the repeated attempts which he made to clear his throat. But, all these imperfections and defects of configuration, were obliterated by the ability which he displayed. In spite of the Monotony of his tones, and his total want of animation, as well as grace; yet so power-

ful was reason when flowing from his lips, that every murmur became hushed, and every ear attentive. It seemed, nevertheless, the acute Sophistry of a lawyer, rather than the speech of a man of the world, or the eloquence of a man of letters and education. Every sentence, though admirable in itself, yet resembled more the pleading of the Bar, than the oratory of the Senate. So difficult is it for the most enlightened intellect to throw off the habits of a profession. Dunning neither delighted, nor entertained his hearers; but he subdued them by his powers of argumentative ratiocination, which have rarely been exceeded. They soon afterwards raised him to the Peerage; just in time to attain that elevation, as his constitution speedily sunk under accumulated disorders, which hurried him prematurely to the grave. This extraordinary man, who was not exempt from great infirmity of mind, felt, or perceived so little his corporeal deficiencies, as to consider his person with extraordinary predilection. Fond of viewing his face in the glass, he passed no time more to his satisfaction, than in decorating himself for his appearance in the world. He and Barré, who were fellow-labourers in the same vineyard, represented likewise the same Bo-

rough, Calne; and belonged, or at least looked up to the same political Chief, Lord Shelburne. They consequently were animated by no common principle of union, or of action, with Fox and Burke, except one; that of overturning the Administration. On all other points, a secret jealousy and rivality subsisted between the adherents of the Shelburne, and the Rockingham parties.

Admiral Keppel might likewise be accounted among the principal members of Opposition in the House of Commons, at this period; though his talents seemed to be no more conspicuously exerted in Debate, than they had appeared while he remained on the quarter deck, during the memorable action of the 27th of July, 1778. But the persecution which, as it was pretended, he had undergone, for his conduct on that day; the accusation brought against him by Palliser, and the ministerial, as well as royal enmity, which he had incurred;—these political merits elevated him to a consideration, which he could otherwise never have attained. Excluded from representing the Borough of Windsor, at the recent general Election in 1780; the popular effervescence of the moment, inflamed at his rejection, where

it was supposed that the influence of the Sovereign had considerably operated to his prejudice, brought him in for Surrey: a County in which he possessed no property, nor any hereditary interest. There appeared neither dignity in his person, nor intelligence in his countenance, the features of which were of the most ordinary cast; and his nose, which, in consequence of an accident that befel him in the course of his professional life, had been almost laid flat, gave him an equally vulgar and unpleasant air. His abilities were indeed of a very limited description, altogether unfit for such a theatre as Parliament: but the Minority having already destined him to succeed, and to supplant Lord Sandwich, as soon as they could gain possession of power, it became indispensable to sustain him on every occasion, with all their efforts.

Another distinguished naval Commander, Lord Howe, who then filled a seat in the House, might likewise be numbered among the determined opponents of government. Since his return from America, he had not enjoyed the smiles of the Court; but his professional character supported him with the public. His steady and phlegmatic courage, added to the

wholesome severity of his discipline when on service, deservedly placed him high in the estimation of all parties. Among the sailors he was known, from his dark complexion, by the epithet of "Black Dick." If no genius could be discovered in the lines of his face, there was in them, an expression of serene and passive fortitude, which could not be mistaken. His Profile bore, indeed, a very strong resemblance to the portraits of George the First, from whom, by his mother, he descended. She was the natural daughter of that Prince, by his mistress, Madame de Platen, whom he created Countess of Darlington, some years after his accession to the crown of Great Britain. In Parliament, Lord Howe made, if possible, a worse figure than Keppel; who, when he addressed the House, was at least intelligible, though he might not greatly illuminate the subject. Lord Howe's ideas were commonly either so ill conceived by himself, or so darkly and ambiguously expressed, that it was by no means easy to comprehend his precise meaning. This oracular and confused mode of delivery, rendered still more obscure by the part of the House where he usually sat, which was on a back row, at a distance from the Speaker's chair, encreased however

the effect of his oratory; and seemed to exemplify Burke's assertion, that "obscurity is a "source of the sublime."

Sir George Savile, who represented the county of York, attracted great consideration. His known integrity and disinterestedness, joined to his extensive landed property, elevated him more than any endowments of intellect, or parliamentary ability. He possessed nevertheless, plain manly sense, and a facility of utterance, which, even independant of his high character and ample fortune, always secured him attention.

Lord John Cavendish was listened to, whenever he rose, with similar deference or predilection. His near alliance to the Duke of Devonshire; his very name, connected with the Revolution of 1688, which secured the liberties of Great Britain; his unblemished reputation, and his talents, though very moderate;—all these qualities combined to impress with esteem, even those who differed most from him in political opinion. Nature had in the most legible characters stamped honesty on his countenance: but she had not accompanied it with any ornamental present.

The Opposition already considered him as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Embrio.

General Conway, though by no means a man of first-rate capacity, or a superior speaker, yet surpassed in these respects, either of the two last-mentioned persons. His long military experience, his birth and descent, together with the recollection of his having already occupied one of the most eminent employments of state under a former administration; authorized him to expect a situation no less conspicuous, in any future ministerial arrangement. His figure and deportment were exceedingly distinguished, nor did he want abilities; but his enunciation, embarrassed, and often involved, generally did injustice to his conceptions.

Mr. Thomas Townsend, commonly denominated "Tommy Townsend," and so commemorated in Goldsmith's celebrated Poem of "Retaliation," where he describes Burke,

> "Tho' fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat,
> To induce *Tommy Townsend* to lend him a vote;"

looked confidently forward, no less than General Conway, to a high place in some

future Ministry, when Lord North should be driven from power. Nor were his expectations eventually disappointed. He was a man of very independant fortune, and of considerable parliamentary interest, present, as well as prospective; two circumstances which greatly contributed to his personal, as well as political elevation: for, his abilities, though respectable, scarcely rose above mediocrity. Yet, as he always spoke with facility, sometimes with energy, and was never embarrassed by any degree of timidity, he maintained a place in the front ranks of Opposition.

General Burgoyne would not deserve any place in this list, if respect were had only to his parliamentary talents: but, his sufferings in the cause of Opposition, which elevated him to the rank of a martyr, like Keppel; Fox's attachment towards him, and his connexion by marriage with Lord Derby, one of the Minority chiefs; — these merits supplied every deficiency. It was difficult to contemplate him, without involuntarily recollecting the disgraceful colours under which "Junius" has designated him, as "taking his stand at "a gaming-table, and watching with the "soberest attention, for a fair opportunity of

"engaging a drunken young nobleman at "Picquet;" as "drawing a regular and "splendid subsistence from play;" and as "sitting down for the remainder of his life, "*infamous and contented* with the money "received from the Duke of Grafton, for "the sale of a patent place in the Customs." These aspersions, which never received any public answer, did not prevent his occupying a distinguished place in Fox's regard; who exhibited a strong proof of it, by becoming Burgoyne's Nominee on the Committee appointed to try the contested Election for the Borough of Preston, which he represented, in the spring of 1781. Supported by such ability, the General kept his seat. I have been assured that when he returned on his Parole from America, in May, 1778; the Opposition, apprehensive of his taking part with Administration, and fearful that he might accuse the adherents of Congress in this country, with having contributed by their language in Parliament, if not by other modes of encouragement, to the resistance that produced the disaster of Saratoga; determined, if possible, to gain him. For that purpose, Fox went down privately to Hounslow, where he met Burgoyne soon after he had landed, on

his way from Plymouth to London. In the course of a long and confidential interview, Fox convinced him so thoroughly, that the Ministers would not support him; that Lord George Germain must accuse him, in order to exculpate himself; that the King had imbibed very strong prejudices against him, and that the Administration could not last a twelvemonth; as to induce the General to transfer his charges of misconduct, from the Opposition, to the Treasury Bench. Present protection, and future employment, whenever they should attain to power, followed of course. I have no doubt of the accuracy of this fact, as I received it from high living Authority.

Wilkes could not properly be considered as a member of the Minority, because, though he always spoke from that side of the House, and usually voted with them, yet he neither depended on Lord Rockingham, nor on Lord Shelburne: but, his predilections leaned towards the latter Nobleman. Notwithstanding however the personal collision which may be said to have taken place between the King and him, during the early portion of His Majesty's reign; Wilkes, like Burke, nou-

rished in his bosom, a strong sentiment of constitutional loyalty. He gave indelible proofs of it, during the Riots of June, 1780, when *Bull*, one of the Members for London, crouched under Lord George Gordon's mob. And though Wilkes lent his aid to overturn Lord North's Administration, yet he never yoked himself to Fox's car. On the contrary, no sooner had "the Coalition" unmasked their battery of "the East India Bill," than Wilkes rallying to the crown, as the only protection against Fox's ambition, took the warmest part against that measure: acting in 1784, nearly the same part which Burke did, eight years later, in 1792, after the French Revolution, when he sought shelter behind the throne, against the horrors of Anarchy, regicide, and insurrection: horrors, which Fox never could perceive, and for which he even apologized in no small degree.

Such was the aspect which the House of Commons then presented. Pitt and Sheridan, who have since in different ways occupied so great a share of public attention, had not either of them as yet come forward. In order, however, to form a more complete estimate of the principal individuals who at

that time attracted general notice, either as supporters of Administration, or as Candidates for Office, whenever the Opposition should come into power; it is still requisite to throw a glance over the House of Peers.

The great Earl of Mansfield, though he had already advanced beyond that period of life, at which the faculties of the human mind usually begin to diminish in vigour, did not appear to have lost any of the strength of his intellect. In the court of King's Bench, no less than in Parliament, his transcendent abilities still excited equal respect and admiration. The friend of Pope, of Bolingbroke, and of Sir William Wyndham, during his youth; he united the finest accomplishments of Science, to the most profound knowledge of the laws. In the recent Riots of 1780, the populace, whether considering him as inclined to support measures of an arbitrary nature, or supposing him a friend to principles of religious toleration repugnant to their feelings; selected him for the object of their violence. His house and his papers were consumed: but he had happily escaped any personal effects of their rage; and though not individually a member of Administration, might be con-

sidered as disposed on all occasions, to extend his assistance to the Government. Yet did the constitutional and characteristic timidity which distinguished him, prevent his ever standing forward in moments of Crisis or danger, like Thurlow and Wedderburn, as the champion of ministerial measures. With the single exception of the Duke of Grafton, no man high in Office, had been so severely treated by the pen of "Junius;" and though time had skinned over the wound, the Cicatrice still remained. That able writer, after pursuing the Lord Chief Justice with inconceivable pertinacity, through all the sinuosities of legal concealment or evasion, under which he attempted to shelter himself; — after comparing him to the most prostitute Judges of the most arbitrary reigns; to *Tresillian*, under Richard the Second; and to *Jefferies*, under James the Second; exclaims,—"Who attacks the liberty "of the press? Lord Mansfield. Who in-"vades the constitutional power of juries? "Lord Mansfield. What Judge ever chal-"lenged a Juryman, but Lord Mansfield? "Who was that Judge, who, to save the "King's brother, affirmed that a man of the "first rank and quality, who obtains a ver-"dict in a suit for criminal conversation, is

"entitled to no greater damages than the "meanest mechanic? Lord Mansfield." At him "Junius" levelled his last blows, before he finally disappeared, as a political writer. In his parting letter, addressed to Lord Camden, written towards the end of January, 1772, exciting and invoking that Nobleman to come forward as the accuser of the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, at the Bar of the House of Peers; "Considering," says he, "the situation and abilities of Lord Mans-"field, I do not scruple to affirm, with the "most solemn appeal to God for my sincerity, "that in my judgement, he is the very worst "and most dangerous man in the kingdom. "Thus far I have done my duty in endeavour-"ing to bring him to punishment. But, mine "is an inferior, ministerial office in the "Temple of Justice. I have bound the "victim, and dragged him to the altar." Severe, and perhaps unmerited as these accusations may appear, yet Lord Mansfield's warmest admirers never attempted to deny, that at every period of time while he presided in the Court of King's Bench, his opinions and his Decrees, if not adverse to the liberty of the Press, and to the freedom of the subject, uniformly leaned towards the Crown.

Nor is it possible to justify, either in a moral, or in a legal point of view, his partial and oppressive conduct towards Wilkes in 1763; when the Charges against him for publishing No. 45. of the "North Briton," and the "Essay on Woman," were tried in the Court of King's Bench; while their author, wounded at the time in a Duel, was absent at Paris. Lord Mansfield's enemies, not without some reason asserted, that he was better calculated to fill the office of a *Prætor* under Justinian, than to preside as Chief Criminal Judge of this kingdom, in the reign of George the Third.

Lord Loughborough, who owed to Lord North his recent elevation to the Peerage, constituted one of his ablest advocates, and most zealous supporters, in that House. Wedderburn had risen through the gradations of the law, amidst the discussions of Parliament, side by side with Thurlow. More temperate, pliant, artful, and accommodating in his manners than the Chancellor, he equalled that Nobleman in eloquence, if he did not even surpass him. Churchill, in one of his Satires, has thought proper to describe Wedderburn, as "Mute at the Bar, but in the Senate loud." No man however in public life, possessed more

versatility of talents, or abilities better adapted to every situation. He proved himself as refined a Courtier at St. James's, as he was an able lawyer at Westminster. His defence of Lord Clive, when under accusation before the House of Commons, augmented Wedderburn's legal, as well as parliamentary reputation. It had been perpetually progressive since that time, and rendered him, whether as a Member of the lower, or of the upper House, one of the most distinguished ornaments of the long Robe.

Nor did the Opposition at this time want men of distinguished capacity, professional and political, in the House of Lords, though the Marquis of Rockingham was not to be accounted among the number. His rank, his integrity, and his vast patrimonial property, rather than any intellectual endowments, had placed him at the head of his party. During the short period of time when he formerly filled the post of First Lord of the Treasury, he had displayed more rectitude of intention, than either vigor or ability. Even his constitution and frame of body appeared inadequate to the fatigues of an official situation demanding energy and application. Lord Camden

on the contrary, though much more advanced in years, had retained all the powers of his mind, combined with personal activity. In Debate, he might be esteemed equal to Lord Mansfield himself; while his exertions at every period of his life, in defence of the constitutional liberties of the subject, gave him a sort of superiority to that Nobleman, and greatly endeared him to the nation. His name, almost always united with the great Earl of Chatham, ever since the accession of George the Third, seemed inseparable from the idea of freedom.

If indefatigable and laborious pertinacity, could recommend to office, or qualify for public employment, few members of the upper House possessed a better title to that praise, than the Duke of Richmond. However limited might be the range of his ideas, he supplied in some measure by application, the deficiency of original talent. His person, manners, and address, were all full of dignity; and the personal beauty which distinguished Mademoiselle de la Querouaillè, mistress of Charles the Second, his great grandmother, was not become extinct in him. She is known to have retained her charms, down to a very late period

of her life; and the fables related of Ninon de l'Enclos, were in some measure verified in the Duchess of Portsmouth. The late George Selwyn, who had seen her at Richmond House in the year 1733; — for, she survived Charles the Second, near fifty years; assured me that she was even then possessed of many attractions, though verging towards fourscore. Like his nephew, Mr. Fox, the Duke did not spare the King, when addressing the House of Lords; and he was considered as peculiarly obnoxious at St. James's. Accused by his enemies, of wanting personal courage, he manifested at least no defect of political resolution. At the East India House, in his quality of a Proprietor, no less than as a Peer of Parliament, at Westminster, he was ever active; vigilant in detecting and exposing abuses, real or imaginary; perpetually harrassing every Department with enquiries; and attacking in turn, the Army, the Admiralty, and the Treasury.

But no individual in the upper House, attracted so much national attention from his accomplishments, talents, and extensive information on all subjects of foreign or domestic policy, as the Earl of Shelburne. In the prime

of life, and in the full vigour of his faculties, he displayed whenever he rose to speak, an intimate knowledge of Europe, together with such a variety of matter, as proved him eminently qualified to fill the highest official situation. At an early period of His Majesty's reign, in 1766, he had occupied with great and general approbation, the post of Secretary of State for the Home Department, during more than two years; and he might justly look forward on any change of Ministers, to be again employed in a similar, or even in a higher place of trust and power. His acquaintance with the Continent was minute and accurate, the result of ocular inspection on many points, corrected by reflexion; and improved by correspondence or communications with foreigners of eminence, whom he assiduously cultivated and protected. Mr. Fox himself was far inferior to Lord Shelburne in these branches of information. Nor was that nobleman less versed in all the principles of Finance and of Revenue, than in the other objects of political study that form a Statesman. His house, or more properly to speak, his palace in Berkeley-square, which had formerly constituted the residence of the Earl of Bute; formed at once the centre of a consi-

derable party, as well as the Asylum of taste and science. It is a fact, that during the latter years of Lord North's Administration, he retained three or four Clerks in constant pay and employment, under his own roof, who were solely occupied in copying state-papers or accounts. Every measure of Finance adopted by the first Minister, passed, if I may so express myself, through the Alembic of Shelburne House, where it was examined and severely discussed. There, while Dunning and Barré met to settle their plan of action, as Members of Parliament on the Opposition Bench in the House of Commons; Jackson, who likewise sat in the same assembly, for New Romney, and the variety of whose information had acquired him the name of "Omniscient Jackson," furnished every species of legal or general knowledge. Dr. Price and Mr. Baring produced financial plans, or made arithmetical calculations, meant to controvert and overturn, or to expose those of the first Lord of the Treasury: while Dr. Priestley, who lived under the Earl of Shelburne's personal protection, (just as the celebrated *Hobbes* had done at Chatsworth, under the immediate patronage of the Earls of Devonshire, in the preceding Century;) prosecuted in the midst

of London, his philosophical and chemical researches. Nor ought I to omit in this list of extraordinary men, the distinguished names of Jervis, and of Jekyll; one of whom has risen to such naval honours; and the other has attained to an equal eminence at the Bar, as he enjoys from the charms of his conversation, in private society.

In his person, manners, and address, the Earl of Shelburne wanted no external quality requisite to captivate or conciliate mankind. Affable, polite, communicative, and courting popularity, he drew round him a number of followers or adherents. His personal courage was indisputable. Splendid and hospitable at his table, he delighted his guests by the charms of his conversation and society. In his magnificent library, one of the finest of its kind in England, he could appear as a Philosopher and a man of letters. With such various endowments of mind, sustained by rank and fortune, he necessarily excited universal consideration, and seemed to be pointed out by Nature for the first employments. But, the confidence which his moral character inspired, did not equal the reputation of his abilities. His adversaries accused him of systematic

duplicity and insincerity. They even asserted that unless all the rules of Physiognomy were set at defiance, his very countenance and features eloquently indicated falsehood. In order to fix upon him so injurious an imputation, they gave him the Epithet of *Malagrida*, from the name of a Portuguese Jesuit, well known in the modern history of that kingdom. And these insinuations, though not perhaps accompanied with proofs, were nevertheless, either from the credulity or the malignity of mankind, widely circulated, as well as very generally believed throughout the nation.

February.] Among the circumstances which will always render the Session of 1781 peculiarly interesting to posterity, must be accounted the active appearance of Pitt and of Sheridan on the floor of the House of Commons. They both may be said to have commenced their brilliant parliamentary career, nearly at the same time, within a few days of each other. Both spoke on the side of Opposition, and both were received with marked approbation, by every part of their audience. I was present when each of them rose for the first time. Pitt led the way, on the second reading of Burke's Bill for "the Reform of the King's

"Household;" which, though rejected in the last Session of the preceding Parliament, its author did not the less bring forward anew, towards the close of the Month of February. He reiterated the same Encomiums on the enlightened retrenchments made by Necker, with which he had entertained the House in 1780; extolled the discernment of Louis the Sixteenth, in making choice of such a Minister for Superintendant of the Finances; and asserted that the selection would produce more substantial benefit, as well as more solid glory to his reign, than had resulted from all the deeds of Henry the Fourth. But, the measures adopted by an arbitrary Prince for maintaining a war, in which, contrary to every maxim of wise policy, no less than by the subversion of all treaties subsisting between France and England, he had engaged with us, did not appear to form a proper model for our imitation. After a Debate of considerable length, the Bill was rejected by a majority of forty-three Votes, in a very full House. Great expectations having been formed of Pitt, a sort of anxious impatience for his coming forward, pervaded the assembly; which was strongly impressed from common report, with a belief of his hereditary talents and eloquence.

He unquestionably commenced under most auspicious circumstances; his Birth, and his Name, by resuscitating as it were the first Earl of Chatham, whose memory awakened such animating recollections, preparing every ear to be attentive; and thus removing all the impediments that present themselves in the way of ordinary men, when attempting to address Parliament. But, sanguine as might be the opinions entertained of his ability, he far exceeded them; seeming to attain at his outset, that object, which other Candidates for public fame or favour, slowly and laboriously effect by length of time and regular gradations.

It was in reply to Lord Nugent that Pitt first broke silence, from under the Gallery on the Opposition side of the House. The same composure, self-possession, and imposing dignity of manner, which afterwards so eminently characterized him when seated on the Treasury Bench; distinguished him in this first essay of his powers, though he then wanted three months to have compleated his twenty-second year. The same nervous, correct, and polished diction, free from any inaccuracy of language, or embarrassment of deport-

ment, which, as First Minister, he subsequently displayed, were equally manifested on this occasion. Formed for a popular assembly, he seemed made to guide its deliberations, from the first moment that he addressed the members composing it. But, a circumstance which will more forcibly exemplify this assertion, than any description, I must not omit. Lord George Germain having occasion to make some verbal communication to Welbore Ellis, who sat near him, they continued during a few moments to whisper each other, while Mr. Pitt was speaking. Offended at such an apparent inattention on the part of two individuals so high in office, he suddenly suspended his discourse; and then looking round upon the House, which was all ear, he said, with a manner, and in a tone still more impressive than the reproof, "I shall wait till "the *Agamemnon* of the present day, has "finished his consultation with the *Nestor* of "the Treasury Bench." The observation, which, independent of its classic beauty, and its severity, arose from an accident impossible to have been forceseen, it was obvious, could not therefore be premeditated; and its effect, not only on the two persons to whom it was specially directed, but on the House at large,

was electrick. Lord George and Mr. Ellis, in some confusion, instantly resumed their former attitudes, and Mr. Pitt experienced no further interruption. All men beheld in him at once a future Minister; and the Opposition, overjoyed at such an accession of strength, vyed with each other in their Encomiums, as well as in their predictions of his certain elevation. Burke exclaimed, that "he was not merely a chip of the old block, "but the old block itself." Nor did Fox do less justice to the talents of this new competitor for power, popularity, and employment. Having carried him to Brookes's Club, a few days afterwards, Pitt was elected a member of that society, which then comprehended almost all the men of rank and great talents engaged in parliamentary Opposition to Ministers. It is a fact, that Pitt remained during several years a member of Brookes's; but he rarely, if ever, appeared there, after he came into Office. So nice was his tact, so deep his penetration, and in so different a mould was he cast from Fox, that even on his first reception in St. James's-street, though it was of the most flattering description, he was not dazzled nor won by it. On the contrary he held back, and never coalesced with that

party, beyond external appearances. Fox himself soon perceived the coldness of his new ally, for whom play had no attractions: but neither he nor Burke were probably aware of the profound and regulated, but soaring ambition, which animated him to aspire, without passing through any intermediate stage, to the first employments of the State. Still less could they apprehend or foresee, that he would form during the greater part of their future lives, the principal and insurmountable bar to their own attainment, or permanent enjoyment of office.

Mr. Pitt, when he thus rose for the first time, represented the Borough of Appleby in Westmoreland, and was indebted for his seat in the House, to Sir James Lowther; whose property and parliamentary influence, which in the Counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland were immense, enabled him to bring seven or eight Members into that assembly. Sir James was rewarded by Mr. Pitt, for this, and for other services, with an English Earldom, little more than three years afterwards. But he eagerly embraced the first occasion which presented itself, to obtain a more independent seat in Parliament, and to eman-

cipate himself from any dependance on, or personal connexion with the Lowther Family. The matrimonial alliance of Sir James with Lord Bute, one of whose daughters he had married; the name of *Lowther*, which had been rendered unpopular, if not odious, by the memorable contest with the Duke of Portland, in the beginning of the present reign; and even the character of Sir James Lowther himself, tyrannical, overbearing, violent, and frequently under no restraint of temper, or of reason; — all these combined motives impelled Mr. Pitt to seek elsewhere a more independent title, to call himself one of the representatives of the people; particularly after his elevation to the head of the Treasury. He was, nevertheless, compelled to wait for such an occasion, till the Dissolution of Parliament in March, 1784, during all which period he sat for Appleby, even when Chancellor of the Exchequer, under Lord Shelburne's Administration, and afterwards when first Lord of the Treasury. At length, in the Spring of 1784, his ministerial weight, rather than his individual qualities and interest, enabled him to turn out Lord John Townsend, (then Mr. John Townsend), and to place himself at the head of the Poll for the University of

Cambridge; an election, and a seat, in every sense gratifying to his feelings.

It was not, indeed, to the personal friendship of Sir James Lowther, that he originally owed his entrance into the House of Commons. He was indebted for that advantage, which conducted him with such rapidity, to the highest offices, principally, if not solely, to the late Duke of Rutland, a Nobleman of nearly the same age as Mr. Pitt. The early intimacy which subsisted between them at the University of Cambridge, was cemented by the political ties that had formerly united their fathers, the Marquis of Granby, and the Earl of Chatham, during the reign of George the Second. As every circumstance connected with the public life and career of such a man as Mr. Pitt, becomes interesting, I shall relate from my own personal knowledge, some facts not undeserving of commemoration, upon this subject.

Among the persons who were admitted to the familiarity of the late Duke of Rutland, and who had access to him at almost all hours, about this time, was a man of the name of Kirkpatrick. Possessing a small property at

Penrith, in the County of Cumberland, within a few miles of Lowther Hall, he was known to, and protected by Sir James Lowther, with whom he maintained a constant and habitual intercourse. The Duke and Sir James, both, treated him as a sort of Buffoon, who diverted them by his eccentricities, and he was frequently employed between them, on errands or messages. During the Autumn of the year 1780, the Duke dispatched Kirkpatrick from his house in Arlington-street, to Sir James Lowther, who resided in Charles-street, Berkeley-square; with a verbal request, that "Sir "James would do him the favour, if possible, "to reserve a seat among his Boroughs, for a "friend of the Duke's, Mr. William Pitt, a "younger son of the Earl of Chatham." Kirkpatrick has often related to me the particulars of his interview and conversation with Sir James Lowther, whom he found in the act of shaving himself. "Well, Kirk," for so he was always denominated; said Sir James, "what may be your business?" "I am come "from Arlington-street," answered he, "with "a message to you from the Duke." "What "are his commands?" replied Sir James. "He requests that you will oblige him by re-"serving a seat for a friend of his, Mr. Pitt,

"Lord Chatham's brother, a young gentle-
"man of vast abilities, whom the Duke wishes
"to bring into Parliament." "I wish he had
"sent sooner to me;" returned he; "Is he
"very anxious about it, Kirk?" "Exceed-
"ingly so, you may be assured." "Then go
"back to the Duke," was his reply, "and
"tell him that I will see him in the course of
"this day, and we will talk the matter over
"together." Kirkpatrick carried back the answer: Sir James Lowther and the Duke of Rutland having met, the eventual consequence of their interview was that Mr. Pitt came in for Appleby. Not, however, at the General Election which took place in September, 1780. Mr. William Lowther, the present Earl of Lonsdale, having succeeded in making his election for Carlisle, as well as for Appleby, vacated his seat for the latter place, after the meeting of Parliament, and Mr. Pitt was then returned for that Borough. This event did not happen before the beginning of 1781, towards the close of January, when he took the oaths and his seat. He remained silent about five weeks, before he rose and pronounced his first Speech.

"Having been brought up, as is universally

known, to the profession of the law, he went the Western Circuit, as a Barrister, in the Spring of the year 1780. But he unquestionably meditated very early, a shorter, and more brilliant, though perhaps not a less laborious, mode of attaining to personal and political elevation. He could not be ignorant of the prodigious powers with which nature had endowed him; which talents, his father, who must equally have perceived them, had cultivated with the utmost care. A son of the great Earl of Chatham, however narrow might be his fortune, yet could not experience much difficulty in procuring entrance into the House of Commons; and never was any juncture more propitious for his surmounting all the ordinary impediments in the way to high employment. In 1781, Lord North palpably and evidently verged towards his extinction as First Minister. With him, it was obvious, all his Colleagues in the Cabinet must pass away, and a new order of things would arise. America having nearly effected her emancipation, peace, it was probable, would follow that event, at no great distance of time. The King was unpopular; while Fox had become an object of general attachment throughout the country, in defiance of

his excesses, principally by the steady opposition which he had given to the American war. But, both those circumstances rendered him odious to His Majesty, who disliked his political principles, and reprobated his personal irregularities. Lord Rockingham, and the Duke of Portland, were only great names, and heads of a Party. It was impossible for the Sovereign, even if he had wished it, to call the Duke of Grafton back to office: Lord Bute himself would have been less obnoxious to the country. No individual in either House of Parliament, except Lord Shelburne, remained, therefore, who could rationally aspire to succeed Lord North, unless by violence, and against the King's inclination. Mr. Pitt's youth might, indeed, seem at first sight, an insurmountable impediment to his being placed in a Cabinet Office, without first passing through the intermediate stages. But, common rules and precedents did not apply to him, whose hereditary claims to national regard, as the living representative of that great Minister who had humbled the House of Bourbon, disposed all men to consider him with predilection. Mr. Fox derived no such moral inheritance from his father; whose memory, far from being embalmed in the veneration of

the English people, laboured on the contrary, under imputations of peculation the most generally diffused. There existed, therefore, no solid obstacle to Mr. Pitt's speedy attainment, even of the greatest Ministerial situations, in the course of a very short time. And when we contemplate the range of his mind, the very limited fortune that he possessed, the coldness of his constitution, the dominion which he exercised over his passions, the expansion of his intellect, the splendor of his eloquence, and the immeasurable ambition or thirst of power which impelled him; we may give him credit for having, almost as soon as he came into Parliament, foreseen, anticipated, and confidently calculated on his soon reaching the object of his exertions.

I have been assured, that while going the Circuit to which I have alluded, he was retained as Junior Counsel, in a Cause, with a small Fee, by Mr. James Dutton, who became, a short time subsequent, Member for the County of Glocester. After this first acquaintance made with each other, they met, however, no more, except in Parliament, till the beginning of the year 1784. At that time Mr. Pitt, who, though First Lord of the Trea-

sury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, could not command a Majority in the House of Commons, where he held his power by a most precarious tenure; was anxiously looking round for assistance and support. Mr. Dutton having requested an interview, then waited on him as First Minister, and stated that he was disposed, as well as desirous, to support His Majesty's Government: but, that as it was highly probable, or rather almost certain, the conflict between the two parties, must produce a speedy Dissolution of Parliament, if Mr. Pitt retained his Office; and as it would be most inconvenient for him to stand a contested Election for Glocestershire; he therefore hoped for the conditional promise of being recommended to His Majesty for a Peerage, in return for his interest and vote. To this proposition Mr. Pitt replied, that he should be happy to receive Mr. Dutton's aid, and should always retain a becoming remembrance of his friendship or assistance; but that he did not desire, and could not accept it, under such a condition, to which he could in no degree accede, nor would come under any engagement of the proposed nature. With that short answer, so analogous to his character, he dismissed Mr. Dutton; who

wisely, however, trusting to his gratitude, voted with him on every Division, during the critical period which followed. Nor did he miscalculate his interests: for, within four months afterwards, in May of the same year, he received his reward, being created a Peer, by the title of Lord Shireborne.

Sheridan, on the other hand, notwithstanding the extent and variety of his endowments, which many persons may perhaps consider to have been even superior to those of Mr. Pitt himself; did not instantly take possession of the House in the same commanding manner. The reason was obvious. Though Sheridan manifested, from the first time that he presented himself to public notice as a Speaker, the greatest talents for Debate; yet he found many impediments, prejudices, and obstacles, to surmount in his progress. It is likewise to be remarked, that Mr. Pitt, when he rose for the first time, spoke *in reply*. Sheridan, who, though he had previously risen in the House, may be said to have commenced his career by introducing three Motions, respecting "the "interference of an armed Force in suppress- "ing the Riots of June, 1780;" must naturally have arranged his ideas with more order

and precision, than it was possible to do in answer to a preceding Speech. In fact, he won his way by superior talent, temper, wit, and argument, which enabled him to triumph over every difficulty. Mr. Pitt might be said to descend, as from an eminence, on the House. Sheridan laboured up hill, with slow, but uniform pace, sustained altogether by his own prodigious parts, and by Fox's steady friendship. His father, though a man of genius, could lend him no assistance. Old Sheridan was, on the contrary, in such contracted circumstances, as to have been compelled, for his support, some years after the period of which I am now speaking, to give Lectures, at a very low price, on dramatic Elocution or Declamation, at a public room, in Gerrard-street, Soho. Henderson, the celebrated Actor, was, I believe, his Co-adjutor. No individual in my time, Burke himself not excepted, owed less to fortune, or was more indebted to nature for his vast reputation and success, than Sheridan. He did not, however, succeed in the object of his Speech, which evidently meant to throw a severe, though an indirect censure, on the Sovereign, as well as on the Administration, for issuing those Orders which had rescued London from

the last effects of violence and outrage. Lord North disdained either to demand, or to accept, indemnity for an act, which, he was conscious, merited the highest commendation; and the House rejected by a large Majority, the only one of Sheridan's three Motions that he ventured to submit to a Division. It may indeed justly excite some astonishment, that any Body of men should attempt to call into question the rectitude and propriety of a measure, only applied at the last extremity, in order to rescue the Capital from inevitable conflagration, and public Credit from total subversion. But, never were the powers of Government fallen into such debility, as towards the close of the American war. Nor ever did Opposition venture to treat Pitt, or Addington, or Perceval, with the contumelious personality, which Fox and Burke used towards Lord North, on a variety of occasions.

March.] That Minister, though supported by a Parliament newly elected, and though he had carried the Address to the Throne at the commencement of the Session, by sixty-nine Votes, yet was by no means master of its deliberations. He retained, indeed, a Majority, which might be esteemed consider-

able; but it was nevertheless fluctuating, precarious, and destitute of confidence in their Leader. The Minority, on the contrary, who augmented every month in numbers and animation, considered the termination of the American war, as the term of the existence of the Administration; and they already predicted, as well as anticipated with certainty, the ill success of Lord Cornwallis's expedition against the Southern Provinces. Notwithstanding, indeed, some faint gleams of hope and of success which appeared in the Spring of 1781, few except the most sanguine, continued to expect the reduction of America to obedience, by the British arms. Emboldened by the disastrous state of foreign affairs, and availing themselves of the unpopularity of the Ministry, the Opposition attacked in the severest terms, Lord North's financial measures. The Loan which he had recently negotiated, having risen suddenly to a prodigious Premium, became a subject of bitter invective, as profuse, improvident, and constituting a systematic engine of parliamentary corruption. And though the bargain which had been made, was ultimately maintained by a Majority of more than fifty Votes; yet the impression produced by Opposition,

both in, and out of the House, announced an approaching Crisis, however it might still be suspended or protracted by a variety of events.

I cannot too often repeat, while dwelling on this period of our History, that no virtues of the Sovereign, however eminent, and no ability of Administration, however recognized, could stem the unpopularity of the American war. With the two exceptions of Johnson and of Gibbon, the former of whom defended in print, the measures of Government, in the beginning of the contest; and the latter, after drawing up the Manifesto issued against Spain in 1779, voted, as a Member of the House of Commons, in support of Lord North, throughout the whole progress of hostilities; all the eminent or shining talents of the country, led on by Burke, were marshalled in support of the Colonies. The aid of Poetry alone seemed wanting to compleat the delusion. Just at this time the marriage of Lord Althorpe, (the present Earl Spencer,) with Miss Lavinia Bingham, took place; an event which I only mention incidentally, as it gave birth to one of the most beautiful lyric productions in the English language. Mr. Jones, better known

afterwards as Sir William Jones, emulating at once the fame of Milton and of Gray, in "The Muse recalled," reminded us of some of the most touching passages of "Lycidas," and of "The Bard." He, too, lent his powerful assistance to the cause of Rebellion. Like *Goldsmith*, who, ten years earlier, erroneously assumed in his "Deserted Village," as the Basis of his Poem, that population and rural happiness were abandoning England; Jones carried his assumption in our disfavour, to a still greater length. Juvenal, though he wrote under Domitian, only asserts that female modesty and justice withdrew from earth to heaven, after the extinction of Saturn's reign:

> "Paulatim deinde ad superos Astræa recessit,
> Hac comite, atque duæ pariter fugere sorores."

But Jones, after lamenting that "Freedom "and Concord repudiate the sons of Albion," carries off all the Virtues from this degenerate Island:

> "Truth, justice, reason, valour, with them fly,
> To seek a purer soil, a more congenial sky."

Impelled by the prejudice which then prevailed, and borne on the wings of poetic

as well as of Party violence, he transports these virtues to the Chesapeake and the Delaware:

> "Beyond the vast Atlantic deep,
> A dome by viewless Genii shall be rais'd,
> The walls of Adamant, compact and steep,
> The portals with sky-tinctured gems emblaz'd.
> There on a lofty throne shall *Virtue* stand:
> To her the youth of *Delaware* shall kneel;
> And when her smiles rain plenty o'er the land,
> Bow, *Tyrants*, bow beneath th' avenging steel!"

Here, in a fine frenzy, he seems to behold as in a vision, the modern *Washington*, and the Congress met, after successfully throwing off all subjection to Great Britain. George the Third is pretty clearly designated in the last line, apostrophizing tyrants. It was not, however, civil liberty, but independence on the mother country; it was not freedom, but emancipation from the parent stock, that America emulated to attain by arms. She might have been admitted to participate in the blessings of our free Constitution; but she must then have paid her pecuniary debts to British subjects, all which became liquidated in the Crucible of Insurrection. Burke, within ten years after the conclusion of the American

war, found out his error, when he beheld the French Revolution spring from the ashes of Hancock and Adams. He then endeavoured, as he said, "to trim the boat at the other "end." Mr. Fox never could discover any thing wrong, either in the one, or in the other Revolution. We have lived to behold the virtuous American Government, within thirty years from the period of their emancipation, voluntarily become the accomplices and allies of the most sanguinary, flagitious, and obdurate tyrant, who ever appeared among men. We have seen this virtuous people yoke themselves to his car, when he was setting out for Moscow, in opposition to the united struggles of all Europe for deliverance; thus endeavouring, as far as their power extended, to cement by our destruction, his detestable empire. Madison, unlike Thrasibulus or Brutus, only aspired to uphold and perpetuate the dominion of his Corsican Master. It will demand Ages to wipe out the stain of such national turpitude, from the American annals. But, under Lord North's Administration, the Insurgents beyond the Atlantic, were generally seen through the most partial and favourable Medium: while Philip the Second, in his attempt to extinguish all the rights of human

nature among his subjects in the Netherlands, was hardly stigmatized with severer epithets, than the Opposition applied to the King of Great Britain.

The consideration of East India affairs, which formed one of the most important objects of the Session, engrossed universal attention. As early as February, a *Select* Committee having been appointed, ostensibly for the exclusive purpose of reporting on the state and abuses of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Bengal, General Richard Smith was placed at their head, as Chairman. His local knowledge of India, seemed to qualify him in some measure for the situation. He had acquired a large fortune, while in that part of the world; but, which he was supposed to have squandered since his return. Though destitute of the advantages of education, he did not by any means want parts; and he displayed some talent in addressing the House. But as the Committee allowed themselves to become subservient to the purposes of Party, and particularly to be made the instrument of personal enmities or resentments, they soon degenerated into an engine of private attack, and of individual persecution.

April.] Intelligence of Hyder Ally's invasion of the Carnatic, followed by the defeat of the British forces under Fletcher and Baillie, which reached London in April, spread universal consternation. In order fully to appreciate the extent of that calamity, and its operation on the public mind, we must recollect the state of the British Empire at the period under our review. The fabrick seemed to be every-where collapsing by its own weight, or yielding to external attack. In the Western Hemisphere, America might be considered as already lost. Many of the Windward and Leeward Islands were reduced to the obedience of France; and the remainder, it was thought, must speedily fall. Jamaica itself appeared insecure. At home, the public Funds experienced a progressive depression; while Ireland taking up arms, demanded freedom, sword in hand. Cadiz and Brest had been crowded with our captured Merchantmen, to whom the English Navy no longer afforded its accustomed protection. Under these circumstances, the eyes and hopes of all men were turned towards the East, as the only quarter from which we might expect relief. But, there, a combination of European and Asiatic enemies, aided by in-

ternal Rebellion, and fomented by discord among the Members of the Supreme Government, threatened the subversion of our power on the Ganges, no less than on the Coast of Coromandel. Hastings quitting Calcutta, had repaired to Benares, in order to arrest the progress of Cheyt Sing's revolt. At Madras, the Government of Rumbold was become odious for rapacity, and despicable from its pusillanimity. Nor must it be forgotten that we then neither possessed the Cape of Good Hope, nor Ceylon, nor Guzerat, nor the Islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, nor Java, nor the Moluccas. Even the Carnatic belonged, not to us, but to our Ally, the Nabob of Arcot. With the Mharatta Empire we were at war. The rich Countries of Mysore and of Bidnoor, occupying a central portion of the Peninsula, extending through several degrees of Latitude along the Malabar Coast, and intersecting all communication by land between the two Presidencies of Madras and of Bombay; — these territories, so calculated to annoy us, were then subjected to a martial, enterprizing, and active Prince, animated by determined hostility to the English, assisted by French Engineers, and himself habituated to the European system of Tactics. His

Cavalry bursting in through the defiles of the mountains of the Ghauts, overran the fertile plains of the Carnatic and of Tanjore, bearing down all resistance. Madras itself, invested by the enemy, was scarcely preserved from falling into Hyder's possession; and it must be confessed that the British Dominions in Hindostan, shook to their foundation.

May.] Such was the impression produced by this unexpected event, which seemed imperatively to call for measures of energy, that it gave rise to the appointment of a *Secret* Committee in the House of Commons, moved for by the First Minister himself. The Lord Advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, being constituted their Chairman, they were specially charged to enquire into the causes of the war existing in the Carnatic. Notwithstanding the severe animadversions levelled by the Opposition, on the Majority of the names chosen; several of the Members were men of equal ability and integrity, whose Reports distinctly pointed out the origin, and indicated the remedy, for those abuses, or acts of mal-administration, which had produced such complicated distress on the Coast of Coromandel. Lord North, in the critical

and perilous condition of the East India Company, unable to obtain from the Proprietors, or from the Court of Directors, such advantageous pecuniary terms for the renewal of their Charter, as he thought the Nation was authorized to demand; had recourse to his ordinary palliative, Procrastination. He renewed the Charter for a very limited period; and by that measure eventually originated the memorable Bill of Fox, towards the close of 1783, which produced such national convulsions, terminated by the compleat destruction of the "Coalition Ministry."

June.] Towards the middle of June, Fox, strenuously supported by Pitt, made an ineffectual effort for compelling the Administration to abandon the further prosecution of the American War, and to conclude peace with the Colonies. Neither the House, nor the Nation, though both were weary of the contest, could, however, be induced to relinquish it, while Lord Cornwallis seemed to be advancing with his army, through the central Provinces, towards the Chesapeake. Fox's Motion was rejected by a Majority of seventy-three. But, the most interesting Debate of the Session, and in many points of view, one

of the most interesting Discussions which I ever witnessed in the House of Commons, took place on the Motion for amending, or in fact virtually repealing, "The Marriage Act." It stood altogether unconnected with Ministers, or with Party politics, though originated by Fox, at a very advanced period of the year. The Question seemed in itself to be not less philosophical and moral, than a measure of State, or an object of policy. Never did Fox appear to me in a more elevated light, than on that occasion, while pleading the Cause of his fellow-subjects at large, against the shackles and impediments opposed, as he asserted, by Aristocracy, family pride, and wealth, to the matrimonial union of two persons of dissimilar rank and condition. His father, Lord Holland, for whom he nourished the warmest filial affection, had manifested similar sentiments. General Burgoyne, who supported the Bill, and whose eloquence was usually tame, as well as destitute of entertainment, seemed to rise above himself, and to be inspired by the subject. On the other hand, Burke, with no less ability than Fox, and with equal powers of argument, appealed to many of the strongest passions of the human mind, while he op-

posed the measure brought forward by his friend. They completely diverged on this occasion, in opposite directions, each displaying uncommon ingenuity, enthusiasm, and profound reasoning, in their respective Speeches. Lord North, as might be expected, inclined to oppose every innovation on the Marriage Act; and there could have been little doubt, as far as the temper of the House manifested itself, that Fox's Bill would have been rejected by a great Majority, if the sense of the Members present had been taken upon it. But, no Division was demanded; and Fox, abandoning it for the present, pledged himself, if ever he should come into Power, to renew the Motion from the Treasury Bench. This pledge he never, indeed, redeemed: but if we reflect, for how short a time he continued in Office, when Secretary of State in 1782, as well as in 1783, together with the multiplicity of matter which then pressed upon him; we cannot wonder, though it is possible we may regret, his not having resumed the subject.

July.] Many circumstances contributed to sustain, and to prolong, the duration of Lord North's Administration, notwithstanding the

misfortunes and disgraces which continued annually to mark its progress. The Mutiny in the Pensylvania Line, which for a moment seemed to menace the American Congress with internal revolt, during the Spring of 1781; Lord Cornwallis's victory over Greene, at Guilford; followed by Lord Rawdon's advantage gained over the same General at Camden, in North and South Carolina; lastly, the expectations formed from the advance of the British Forces into the Province of Virginia: — all these events held the minds of men in suspense, till the Prorogation of Parliament in July, allowed the Minister to retire for some time, from the scene of his political exertion. The Province of West Florida had nevertheless been conquered by *Spain*, while *France* reduced to its subjection the Island of Tobago. *Our* only acquisition consisted in the seizure of the defenceless Island of St. Eustatius, in the West Indies, belonging to the Dutch; a capture which served to cover Rodney and Vaughan, the Naval and Military Commanders in Chief, with Obloquy, on account of their severe treatment of the inhabitants. Even on the element of the Sea, every encounter with the enemy, from its indecisive nature, rather tended to

augment their courage, as well as their enterprize.

August.] The severest naval action which took place during the whole course of the American War, was the battle fought at this time between Parker and Zoutman, who commanded the English and Dutch squadrons in the North Sea, off the Dogger Bank. But, it bore no resemblance in its results, to the glorious victory obtained in our time, by Duncan, at Camperdown; and might more aptly be compared with the sanguinary, though indecisive conflicts for superiority under Charles the Second, when the Navies of Holland were led by Tromp and Ruyter, while those of England were conducted by James, Duke of York, by Prince Rupert, and by Montague, first Earl of Sandwich. On this occasion, the King, departing from the ordinary line of his conduct, embarked on the Thames, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, and descended the river to the Nore, where he visited Admiral Parker, on board his ship, the "Fortitude." One of the defects attributed to His Majesty's natural character, but, which perhaps principally resulted from his secluded education during his grandfather's reign, and the retired

habits of life which he then imbibed under Lord Bute's tuition; was his supposed reluctance to become personally acquainted with the people over whom he reigned. His enemies described him as a Prince averse to all communication with his Subjects, except at a Levee. Thus the "Heroic Epistle" exclaims,

"Our sons some slave of greatness may behold,
Cast in the genuine Asiatic mould,
Who of three realms shall condescend to know
No more than he can spy from Windsor's brow."

Yet when the King, bursting for the first time since his accession to the Throne, through the restraints which he imposed on himself, went down to Portsmouth in June, 1773, to inspect his fleet; with what severe raillery did not the same poem endeavour to expose him to derision?

"There shall he see, as other folks have seen,
That ships have anchors, and that seas are green;
Shall count the tackling trim, the streamers fine,
With Bradshaw prattle, and with Sandwich dine;
And then row back, amidst the cannon's roar,
As safe, as sage, as when he left the shore."

But it would only argue folly to deny, that during the first twenty-three years of his reign, from 1761, as soon as Lord Bute came

into Power, to the end of 1783, when Fox brought forward the "East India Bill," George the Third was most unpopular. His subjects, however, made him ample amends for so long withholding from him the testimonies of their affection, by the general and unbounded attachment which they have since manifested towards him, down to the moment when he ceased to sway the sceptre.

September.] Admiral Darby, who continued to command the Channel Fleet, had successfully relieved Gibraltar, during the course of the Spring, when reduced to great extremity. But, in the Autumn, our numerical inferiority compelled that Commander to take refuge in Torbay; while the combined French and Spanish Fleets, for the third time since the beginning of the war, occupied the entrance of the British Channel, and even meditated to attack us, as we lay at anchor on our own coast. So low was the naval power of England reduced, towards the conclusion of Lord North's Administration, amidst the exhausture and calamities occasioned by the American war! But, towards America itself, all eyes were anxiously turned; where, it became evident, affairs rapidly tended to some

great and decisive Crisis. Lord Cornwallis having advanced into the province of Virginia in June, finally established himself at York town in August. No position could have been more judiciously chosen; and it might unquestionably have been maintained under every disadvantage, against the united force of America and of France, if a chain of fortuitous accidents, rather than a series of measures, had not led to the unavoidable Catastrophe which terminated the war. De Grasse, who commanded the French Fleet, was not less favored by fortune, in finding the mouth of the Chesapeake unoccupied, on his arrival there from the West Indies; than he derived aid from the delays that prevented the English Squadron under Graves, from anticipating his seizure of that important station. Graves and Clinton, both, successively failed, only by the short interruption of a few days: the first, in occupying the Chesapeake with a naval force; the last, in arriving with an army, before Lord Cornwallis's surrender, and thereby rescuing him from the necessity of capitulating to Washington. In this desperate situation, precluded from all possibility of relief, Lord Cornwallis laid down his arms; and the American Rebellion, after a contest

of more than six years, finally became a Revolution.

October.] It is at this point of time, that we must place the highest elevation to which Louis the Sixteenth attained during his reign: an elevation only to be paralleled in the French annals, by recurring to the brilliant Eras of Louis the Fourteenth. For his grandfather Louis the Fifteenth never stood on such an eminence in the eyes of Europe; not even in the year 1748, previous to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, though his troops, conducted by Marshal Saxe, after defeating the Allies in various actions, had then overrun the Austrian Low Countries, and nearly reduced Brabant. In October, 1781, the King of France beheld America finally dissevered from Great Britain, by the union of his armies with those of the Insurgents; while he received at the same period Lord Cornwallis's sword, surrendered to La Fayette. His forces were occupied in pursuing their career of victory throughout the West Indies; and in the East, Suffrein, in his repeated Naval engagements with Sir Edward Hughes, not only maintained the honour of his Sovereign's flag, but had nearly succeeded more than once, in obtaining a

decided superiority over our squadron on the Coast of Coromandel. The Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon, acting in subservience to the views of the Court of Versailles, after subjecting Minorca and West Florida, held Gibraltar besieged by sea and land; the reduction of which fortress, calculated to render for ever illustrious the reign of Charles the Third, was anticipated with sanguine impatience by the two Crowns. Our Commerce had not suffered less by the depredations, than our Colonies had been diminished by the arms, of France. Holland, ranging under the same Standard, made common cause with Louis, against her antient Ally. It only remained for them to crush the Channel fleet of England, in order to dictate the terms of peace; and so nearly did Guichen and Cordova, who commanded the combined Navies of France and Spain, appear to be to atchieving that last object, as to impress us with the utmost apprehension of its completion. Who, when contemplating such a scene, could have imagined that this descendant of so many Kings, that had reigned for eight hundred years over the French, would perish on a Scaffold, in his own Capital, scarcely more than eleven years afterwards;

the victim of his inert pusillanimity, in not firmly resisting the first ebullitions of popular innovation!

As if to secure and perpetuate the Bourbon line, the Queen of France, who had been married more than ten years, without giving a male heir to the Crown, at length brought into the world a Son. Catherine of Medicis, like Maria Antonietta of Austria, had remained childless for nearly the same period of time, before she produced a successor. The young Dauphin's baptism was performed in this very month, with extreme magnificence, at Versailles. Happily for himself, he expired early in June, 1789; only a few weeks before the fatal Revolution which took place in July of that year, swept away the Monarchy, to place Robespierre and Bonaparte successively on the throne of Henry the Fourth. The Dauphin was in his ninth year, when he finished his short career. I have been assured by those who had access to know the fact, that at the age of seven years, when the charge of his person, according to the established usage of the old French Court, was surrendered up by the Governess, and he was then put under the care of men; the Dauphin

being stripped in the presence of professional persons, and having undergone an examination, was pronounced to be without defect in his formation. But, being made soon afterwards to sit with his feet in a wooden machine calculated to turn them out, the spinal marrow became speedily affected by it. Whether this assertion be accurate or not, it is certain that the Vertebræ of the back bone growing crooked, he fell into a state of languor, accompanied by debility. I have seen him more than once while in this condition, during the Summer preceding his decease, taking the air in a carriage in the gardens of St.Cloud. His emaciated appearance awakened concern; but he was said not to want intelligence, and the Queen his mother manifested the warmest affection for him while living, as well as sorrow for his loss. The Duke of Normandy, his younger brother, born under a still more inauspicious planet, succeeded to his title, and became, after his father's execution, the unfortunate Louis the Seventeenth.

November.] During the whole month of November, the concurring accounts transmitted to government, enumerating Lord Cornwallis's embarrassments, and the positions

taken by the enemy, augmented the anxiety of the Cabinet. Lord George Germain in particular, conscious that on the prosperous or adverse termination of that expedition, must hinge the fate of the American contest, his own stay in office, as well as probably the duration of the Ministry itself; felt, and even expressed to his friends, the strongest uneasiness on the subject. The meeting of Parliament meanwhile stood fixed for the 27th of November. On Sunday, the 25th, about noon, official intelligence of the surrender of the British forces at York Town, arrived from Falmouth, at Lord George Germain's house in Pall-mall. Lord Walsingham, who previous to his father Sir William de Grey's elevation to the Peerage, had been Under Secretary of State in that department; and who was selected to second the Address in the House of Peers, on the subsequent Tuesday; happened to be there when the messenger brought the news. Without communicating it to any other person, Lord George, for the purpose of dispatch, immediately got with him into a hackney-coach, and drove to Lord Stormont's residence in Portland-place. Having imparted to him the disastrous information, and taken him into the carriage, they instantly proceeded

to the Chancellor's house in Great Russel-street, Bloomsbury, whom they found at home: when, after a short consultation, they determined to lay it, themselves in person, before Lord North. He had not received any intimation of the event, when they arrived at his door, in Downing-street, between one and two o'clock. The First Minister's firmness, and even his presence of mind, gave way for a short time, under this awful disaster. I asked Lord George afterwards, how he took the communication, when made to him? "As "he would have taken a ball in his breast," replied Lord George. For he opened his arms, exclaiming wildly, as he paced up and down the apartment during a few minutes, "Oh, God! it is all over!" Words which he repeated many times, under emotions of the deepest agitation and distress.

When the first agitation of their minds had subsided, the four Ministers discussed the question, whether or not it might be expedient to prorogue Parliament for a few days: but, as scarcely an interval of forty-eight hours remained before the appointed time of assembling; and as many Members of both Houses were already either arrived in London,



or on the road; that proposition was abandoned. It became, however, indispensable to alter, and almost to model anew the King's Speech, which had been already drawn up, and completely prepared for delivery from the Throne. This alteration was therefore made without delay: and at the same time, Lord George Germain, as Secretary for the American Department, sent off a dispatch to His Majesty, who was then at Kew, acquainting him with the melancholy termination of Lord Cornwallis's expedition. Some hours having elapsed, before these different, but necessary acts of business could take place, the Ministers separated, and Lord George Germain repaired to his Office in Whitehall. There he found a confirmation of the intelligence, which arrived about two hours after the first communication; having been transmitted from Dover, to which place it was forwarded from Calais, with the French account of the same event.

I dined on that day at Lord George's; and though the information, which had reached London in the course of the morning, from two different quarters, was of a nature not to admit of long concealment; yet it had not

been communicated either to me, or to any individual of the company, as it might naturally have been through the channel of common report, when I got to Pall-mall, between five and six o'clock. Lord Walsingham, who likewise dined there, was the only person present, except Lord George, acquainted with the fact. The party, nine in number, sat down to table. I thought, the Master of the Horse appeared serious, though he manifested no discomposure. Before the dinner was finished, one of his servants delivered him a letter, brought back by the messenger who had been dispatched to the King. Lord George opened and perused it: then looking at Lord Walsingham, to whom he exclusively directed his observation, "The King writes," said he, "just as he always does, except that "I observe he has omitted to mark the hour "and the minute of his writing, with his usual "precision." This remark, though calculated to awaken some interest, excited no comment; and while the Ladies, Lord George's three daughters, remained in the room, we repressed our curiosity. But they had no sooner withdrawn, than Lord George having acquainted us, that from Paris information had just arrived of the old Count de

Maurepas, First Minister, lying at the point of death; "It would grieve me," said I, "to "finish my career, however far advanced in "years, were I First Minister of France, "before I had witnessed the termination of "this great contest between England and "America." "He has survived to see that "event," replied Lord George, with some agitation. Utterly unsuspicious of the fact which had happened beyond the Atlantic, I conceived him to allude to the indecisive naval action fought at the mouth of the Chesapeake, early in the preceding month of September, between Admiral Graves and Count de Grasse; which in its results might prove most injurious to Lord Cornwallis. Under this impression, "My meaning," said I, "is, that if I were the Count de Maurepas, "I should wish to live long enough, to be-"hold the final issue of the war in Virginia." "He has survived to witness it completely," answered Lord George: "The army has "surrendered, and you may peruse the parti-"culars of the Capitulation, in that paper;" taking at the same time one from his pocket, which he delivered into my hand, not without visible emotion. By his permission I read it aloud, while the company listened in profound

silénce. We then discussed its contents, as affecting the Ministry, the Country, and the War. It must be confessed that they were calculated to diffuse a gloom over the most convivial society, and that they opened a wide field for political speculation.

After perusing the account of Lord Cornwallis's surrender at York Town, it was impossible for all present, not to feel a lively curiosity to know how the King had received the intelligence; as well as how he had expressed himself in his note to Lord George Germain, on the first communication of so painful an event. He gratified our wish by reading it to us; observing at the same time that it did the highest honour to His Majesty's fortitude, firmness, and consistency of character. The words made an impression on my memory, which the lapse of more than thirty years has not erased; and I shall here commemorate its tenor, as serving to shew how that Prince felt and wrote, under one of the most afflicting, as well as humiliating occurrences of his reign. The Billet ran nearly to this effect: "I have received with sentiments "of the deepest concern, the communication "which Lord George Germain has made me,

" of the unfortunate result of the operations " in Virginia. I particularly lament it, on " account of the consequences connected " with it, and the difficulties which it may " produce in carrying on the public business, " or in repairing such a misfortune. But I " trust that neither Lord George Germain, " nor any Member of the Cabinet will sup- " pose, that it makes the smallest alteration " in those principles of my conduct, which " have directed me in past time, and which " will always continue to animate me under " every event, in the prosecution of the pre- " sent contest." Not a sentiment of despondency or of despair was to be found in the letter; the very hand-writing of which indicated composure of mind. Whatever opinion we may entertain relative to the practicability of reducing America to obedience by force of arms at the end of 1781, we must admit that no Sovereign could manifest more calmness, dignity, or self-command, than George the Third displayed in this reply.

Severely as the general effect of the blow received in Virginia, was felt throughout the nation, yet no immediate symptoms of Ministerial dissolution, or even of parliamentary de-

fection, became visible in either House. All the animated invectives of Fox, aided by the contumelious irony of Burke, and sustained by the dignified denunciations of Pitt, enlisted on the same side, made little apparent impression on their hearers, who seemed stupified by the disastrous intelligence. Yet never probably, at any period of our history, was more indignant language used by the Opposition, or supported by Administration. In the ardour of his feelings at the recent calamity beyond the Atlantic, Fox not only accused Ministers of being virtually in the pay of France; but, menaced them with the vengeance of an undone people, who would speedily compel them to expiate their crimes on the public scaffold. Burke, with inconceivable warmth of colouring, depictured the folly and impracticability of taxing America by force, or as he described it, "shearing the wolf." The Metaphor was wonderfully appropriate, and scarcely admitted of denial. Pitt levelled his observations principally against the Cabinet, whom he represented as destitute of principle, wisdom, or union of design. All three were sustained, and I had almost said, outdone by Mr. Thomas Pitt, who, in terms of gloomy despondency, seemed to regard the situation

of the country as scarcely admitting of a remedy, under such a Parliament, such Ministers, and such a Sovereign. Lord North, in this moment of general depression, found resources in himself. He scornfully repelled the insinuations of Fox, as deserving only contempt; justified the principle of the war, which did not originate in a despotic wish to tyrannize America, but from the desire of maintaining the constitutional authority of Parliament over the Colonies; deplored, in common with the Opposition, the misfortunes which had marked the progress of the contest; defied the threats of punishment; and finally adjured the House not to aggravate the present calamity by dejection or despair, but, by united exertion, to secure our national extrication.

The efforts of the First Minister were not unsuccessful, and the Address to the Crown, which indirectly avowed the prosecution of the war beyond the Atlantic as necessary, was carried by a Majority of eighty-nine. Though the continuance of *offensive* hostilities in America, was unequivocally renounced by Lord North, and virtually or silently acquiesced in by Lord George Ger-

main, in the course of Debate; yet so far did Ministers seem from professing a readiness to acknowledge the independance of the thirteen Colonies, that they warmly maintained the wisdom and the necessity of still prosecuting a *defensive* war in that portion of the Globe. In the House of Peers, a still greater proportionate Majority supported Administration. When Fox, presuming on the operation of the recent Misfortune in the Chesapeake, soon afterwards attempted to stop the progress of the supplies, the Opposition experienced a second defeat, only seventy-seven persons voting with them, while Lord North had one hundred and seventy-two. It seemed by no means clear, during the first fortnight after Parliament met, whether any official change whatever would take place; or if an alteration should be made in the Cabinet, to what extent it would be carried. The national forces, exhausted by so long a contest, and now opposed in every quarter by a vast Confederacy, were indeed evidently unequal to continue the effort for subjecting America; and it therefore became obvious that new *Measures* must speedily supercede those, which had been prosecuted during so many years. But, the same *First Minister* might remain in Power,

under a total or a partial change of system; and in that case, all the labours of the Minority would be frustrated, in the moment of their expected completion. The King's firmness was well understood by all parties. Lord North shewed hitherto no disposition to resign, and Parliament had given no indications of having withdrawn their confidence from the Administration. Such appeared to be the aspect of public affairs, in the first week of December.

December.] Though Fox and Pitt seemed at this time to act in perfect political union, yet no man who attentively considered the different spirit which animated their Speeches, whenever the Sovereign became indirectly the subject of their animadversion, could fail to remark their widely dissimilar line of conduct. Fox, whether he was impelled by his consciousness that the King's moral repugnance to many parts of his private character, and to the irregularities of his life, imposed insurmountable obstacles to his ever attaining the royal favour; or whether, having already offended in his political capacity, beyond the hope of pardon, he relied solely on his own talents, aided by Party, to force his way into

the Cabinet, and to maintain himself in that situation; — whichever of these motives principally actuated him, it is indisputable that in all his allusions to the King, although he might affect to shelter himself under the forms of Parliamentary language, yet Fox always chose to consider him as animated by passions and sentiments unbecoming his station, as well as incompatible with the benignity which constitutes the most enviable Attribute of Royalty. Fox designated or characterized him in fact, as under the dominion of resentment, unfeeling, implacable, and only satiated by the continuance of war against his former subjects. In a word, more as a tyrant and an oppressor, than as the head of a free country. the guardian of a limited Constitution.

On the first day of the Session, when an Address to the Crown was proposed, "Those," said Fox, "who are ignorant of "the character of the Prince whose Speech "we have just heard, might be induced to "consider him as an unfeeling Despot, exult-"ing in the horrid sacrifice of the liberty and "the lives of his people. The Speech itself, "divested of the disguise of royal forms, can "only mean, 'Our losses in America have

"been most calamitous. The blood of my "subjects has flowed in copious streams, "throughout every part of that Continent. "The treasures of Great Britain have been "wantonly lavished; while the load of taxes "imposed on an overburthened country, is "become intolerable. Yet will I continue to "tax you to the last Shilling. When, by Lord "Cornwallis's surrender, all hopes of victory "are for ever extinct, and a further conti- "nuance of hostilities can only accelerate "the ruin of the British Empire, I prohibit "you from thinking of peace. My rage for "conquest is unquenched, and my revenge "unsated: nor can any thing except the total "subjugation of my revolted American sub- "jects, allay my animosity.'" When we consider the severity and acrimony of these personal imputations, we cannot wonder that they excited corresponding sensations of resentment in the Royal bosom. What accusations more wounding, could we frame, what motives of action more atrocious, could we suppose, and what language more abhorrent to our feelings, could we have attributed to that monster, whose crimes so long desolated France and Europe, than are here supposed to animate George the Third! It must be

admitted even by his greatest admirers, that Fox, however eminent were his talents, yet by the want of moderation sentenced himself during his whole life, to perpetual exclusion from office; verifying in his own person, Juvenal's remark upon the injuries attendant on eloquence, when he says,

> "Torrens dicendi copia multis,
> Et sua mortifera est facundia."

Pitt, on the contrary, even when he appeared to be most animated by sentiments of indignation against the measures, or the Ministers, repressed any intemperate expressions, and spared the Sovereign. He pronounced indeed in the most unqualified terms, his abhorrence of the further prosecution of the American war; and on one occasion I recollect his solemnly invoking the Divine vengeance on the heads of the Administration, who had reduced the Empire to such a state of ruin and degradation. But, with consummate ability, he separated the King from his weak or evil counsellors; admitted the purity of intention by which he was ever impelled; professed his ardent attachment to the person, as well as to the family, of the reigning Monarch; and declared that it would be best

manifested by exposing the delusion that had been practised on him. The Lord Advocate of Scotland, whose distinguishing political tact, and keen discernment in all matters where his own interest or ambition were concerned, enabled him to descry a Minister in Embrio; appears early to have been impressed with a conviction of this characteristic difference between the two Opposition leaders. While he continued strenuously to support an Administration, the approaching fall of which he nevertheless probably anticipated; he lavished the warmest Encomiums from the Treasury Bench, on the hereditary talents, the brilliant oratory, and early indications of genius in Pitt; under whose protection, aided by his own parliamentary powers, he speedily contrived, after Lord North's resignation, to re-appear on the ministerial theatre.

Notwithstanding the ostensible degree of Harmony and Concert which seemed to animate Ministers in the House of Commons, during the first days of the Session; yet before the middle of December it began to be apparent, that some vital Disunion of Sentiment prevailed among the Members of Administration. Lord North, in fact, *might*

continue, as many persons imagined, First Minister, after the avowal of American Independance. But, Lord George Germain *could not*, by any Possibility, remain in office a single day after such a Recognition. At this Breach the Opposition poured in, and were aided by some of the Adherents of Government, who conceived that by separating the two Ministers, and dismissing the latter, Lord North could yet be preserved at the head of His Majesty's Councils. Sir James Lowther having introduced a Motion tending to declare that "All further Attempts to re-"duce the Americans to obedience by Force, "would be ineffectual;" after a long and very animated Debate, the Order of the Day could only be carried by a majority of Forty-one, in a crouded House, where Four hundred Members were present. Nor was the paucity of Numbers the only apparent symptom of a Ministerial Crisis. Rigby and Dundas acting on this occasion in concert, called on Lord North to state, in his Place, the difference of Opinion which was presumed to exist in the Cabinet. Both of them at the same time avowed and admitted, that no further hope could be entertained of subjecting America by arms. The First Lord of the Treasury,

while he admitted the War with the Colonies to constitute the heaviest Calamity of his life, and expressed his warmest wishes for the attainment of Peace; neither owned, nor denied the charge brought forward by the Lord Advocate of Scotland and Rigby, though he attempted to evade it under some loose and general Declarations. Wearied at length, and attacked no less by his Friends, than by his Opponents, he adopted the singular Expedient of quitting the Treasury Bench, and withdrawing to one of the Seats behind it; leaving Lord George Germain alone, exposed to the Attacks of the Opposition. This scene, which spoke with mute eloquence, and from its peculiarity attracted all eyes, left no room to doubt of the Dissimilarity of Opinion among Ministers, on the great question respecting America.

From that evening, Lord George with reason considered his official capacity as virtually terminated, though he continued to exercise its Functions till a successor should be appointed to the Department. The two Houses having shortly afterwards adjourned for the Christmas Recess, he then came to a full explanation with Lord North. At that Inter-

view, after professing his readiness to remain in his situation as long as it could be beneficial to His Majesty's service, while the Independance of America was not formally recognized; he at the same time earnestly besought Lord North to consider nothing except the Preservation of the Ministry, and the interests of their common Master. For that purpose he advised the First Minister to strengthen himself by a Negociation with some of his political Enemies; and not to allow any personal considerations towards him (Lord George), to delay, or to impede, for an instant, the Arrangements judged to be proper for the general Security. Adding, that he had no personal Stipulations to make, nor Favours to ask; and that he would go down immediately to his seat at Drayton in Northamptonshire, for two or three weeks, in order to allow time to select a successor for his post; after which he would return, and deliver up the seal of his office, on the shortest notice, into His Majesty's hands. As the best proof of his sincerity in these Opinions, he left London a very few days after the above Conversation.

January, 1782.] It might naturally be sup-

posed, that Lord North could not have hesitated, under such circumstances, to accept Lord George's resignation; and that he could as little delay to effect, or at least to attempt, the completion of the Objects recommended to him. Necessity strongly urged them; and the respite which the Christmas Recess allowed for private Negociation, afforded him time for making every requisite Stipulation. Nevertheless, Lord North, though he did not either oppose, or refuse, by no means however positively accepted, even the Resignation of the American Secretary. And when Lord George returned to London from Northamptonshire, towards the middle of the ensuing month, to his no small astonishment, he found his office still undisposed of, and his Successor not more fixed than before he quitted the Capital. He therefore waited patiently till the progress of Events should propel the Indecision, or hasten the Procrastination, of the First Lord of the Treasury.

Perhaps no part of Lord North's Administration, and no feature of his conduct as First Minister, during the twelve years that he continued in office, seems more extraordinary; it might be even said, inexplicable; than this

loss of time at so critical a juncture. Every thing dictated decision. He well knew the Opposition to be principally composed of two parties, called after the names of their respective leaders, Lords Rockingham and Shelburne; which bodies of men, though they agreed in endeavouring to dispossess him of power, agreed in no other speculative or practical principle of policy. Scarcely could they even be with-held from mutual animosity, by the near prospect of the prize in view. If, therefore, the point of American Independance was once conceded by Ministers, there seemed to be no obvious impediment to withhold Lord Shelburne from accepting a situation under government. It was even well known, that he entertained and avowed very strong doubts on the propriety or wisdom of making such a concession to the Colonies, under any possible circumstances; doubts which were re-echoed by his Adherents in the House of Commons. He could not, therefore, it was presumed, be altogether unacceptable to the King. He was, besides, a man of great abilities, the professed disciple of the late Earl of Chatham, and possessed considerable Parliamentary Interest. Lord North held in his hand various means of conciliating

and acquiring his support. Besides the post of Secretary of State, and a higher rank in the English Peerage, to which he might aspire; *four Garters* were then lying on the King's Table, unbestowed; *one* of which Lord Shelburne actually siezed on, as his share of the plunder, when he came into Ministry, within three months from the time of which I speak. All these circumstances seemed, therefore, to point out that quarter, as the obvious point of application.

I have had many opportunities of discussing this question, with those who were well informed in the secret springs and history of Lord North's Administration. But they differed in their solution of the difficulty. It has been confidently asserted, that the King objected to disposing of one of the vacant *Garters* in favour of Lord Shelburne; and absolutely refused to consent to it, when the proposition was made to His Majesty, by the Minister. Sanguine hopes were entertained at St. James's, that even though all further attempts to subjugate America should be abandoned, yet that the same Administration might still continue to conduct the national affairs. Nor was it at all clear that such expectations were chi-

merical. The Session of 1779 had sufficiently proved, that even after being left in a minority, on more than one great public question, a Minister who wished to remain in office, possessed the means of doing it, almost in defiance of the House of Commons. If America was admitted to be independant, and that great impediment once removed, peace would probably follow at no long interval; and however unfortunate he had been in carrying on the war, Lord North might still conclude an honourable pacification. In the House of Peers he possessed a decided majority; and in the lower House of Parliament, when once Government became emancipated from the American War, it was with reason conceived, that the Opposition would again diminish in energy, as well as in numbers. These reasons, however destitute of solidity they eventually proved, may perhaps satisfactorily account for Lord North's seeming supineness, in not endeavouring, at so critical a moment, to divide his opponents, or to augment his own strength.

JAN. 21.] When Parliament met again for the dispatch of business, Lord George Germain therefore attended in his place, in the House of Commons; but the tide of Opposition, which

had been so long principally directed against *him*, as the American Secretary, took at first another direction. Lord Sandwich was in turn attacked by Fox, for his asserted mismanagement of the Admiralty department; and the First Minister, unable to shelter him from investigation, consented to institute an enquiry. Among the most strenuous defenders of the First Lord of the Admiralty, was Lord Mulgrave; a Nobleman who enjoyed a place at that Board. His early expedition of discovery towards the North Pole, had given him some celebrity; and as he was formed on rather a heavy colossal scale, the Opposition, to distinguish him from his younger brother, the Honourable Charles Phipps, who had likewise a Seat in the House, denominated him "Ursa Major." They likewise gave him the name of "Alphesibæus;" I suppose, from some fancied Analogy between him and the awkward imitator of the Dancing Satyrs, commemorated by Virgil, in the fifth Eclogue of his Bucolics. Lord Mulgrave was distinguished by a singularity of physical conformation, having two distinct voices; the one, strong and hoarse; the other, weak and querulous; of both which, he occasionally availed himself. So extraordinary a circum-

stance, probably gave rise to a story of his having fallen into a Ditch, in a dark night, and calling for aid in his shrill voice. A countryman coming up, was about to have assisted him : but, Lord Mulgrave addressing him in a hoarse tone, the Peasant immediately exclaimed, "Oh, if there are two "of you in the Ditch, you may help each "other out of it." In debate, if not animated, he was able and pertinacious. Like Dundas, he contrived, after Lord North's Administration went to pieces, to attach himself to Pitt; who, in 1784, made him Joint Paymaster of the Forces, and six years later raised him to the British Peerage.

Towards the last days of January, after long fluctuation, Lord North at length communicated to Lord George, His Majesty's determination to consent to his resignation, so repeatedly offered; and the resolution taken to supply his loss, by Mr. Welbore Ellis. It seemed difficult to have made a selection, by which less strength would be acquired on the side of Administration; Mr. Ellis's talents being already engaged in favor of Government, by a very lucrative place, that of Treasurer of the Navy. His abilities, however eminent and solid, aided by his long

experience of Parliamentary business, were nevertheless, altogether unequal to contending in stormy times, with the vast energies then collected on the Opposition Benches. He was, besides, far advanced in years; and though his faculties might have preserved all their vigor or freshness, he wanted the requisite fire and animation. His appointment gave satisfaction only to the enemies of the Minister, who exulted in a choice that proved the Paucity, or rather Nullity of the Sources, from which he now attempted to derive support.

Just at this period died Lord Falmouth, at an advanced stage of life; a Nobleman, neither distinguished by his talents or his virtues, but whose name, *Boscawen*, is connected with Naval recollections of the most gratifying kind. Lord Falmouth commanded the Yeomen of the Guard, at the time of his death; but, my sole motive for mentioning his decease, is in order to commemorate an anecdote respecting him. I have been assured, that towards the conclusion of George the Second's Reign, when Mr. Pitt, afterwards created Earl of Chatham, occupied a principal place in the Cabinet; Lord Falmouth

having waited on him, at his Levee, stated his wish to be recommended to His Majesty, for the first vacant *Garter*. The Secretary of State expressing a degree of reluctance to lay the request before the King, and manifesting some disapprobation of the demand itself; "You will be pleased, Sir, to remember," said Lord Falmouth, "that I bring in five votes "who go with Ministry in the House "of Commons; and if my application is "disregarded, you must take the conse-"quence." "Your Lordship threatens me," replied the Minister with warmth; "You "may, therefore, be assured, that so long "as I hold a place in the Councils of the "Crown, you shall never receive the Or-"der of the *Garter*." Then turning round, he exclaimed, addressing himself to those near him,

"Optat Ephippia Bos piger."

Lord Falmouth comprehending nothing of the meaning of these words, but conceiving that the Monosyllable *Bos*, must allude to his name, requested to be informed what the Minister meant by so calling him? "The "observation," replied Mr. Pitt, "is not "mine, but Horace's." As little familiar with the Name of the Roman Poet, as he

was acquainted with his Writings, Lord Falmouth, apprehending that *Horace Walpole* had said something severe or disrespectful concerning him ; under that second mistake, " If Horace Walpole," said he, " has taken " any liberties with my name, I shall know " how to resent it. His brother, *Sir Robert,* " when he was alive, and First Minister, ne- " ver presumed so to treat me." Having thus expressed himself, he quitted Mr. Pitt, leaving the audience in astonishment at the effect of his double misapprehension.

February.] Early in the month of February, Lord George Germain having resigned the seal of his office into the King's hand, received, in recompense of his services, the honor of the Peerage. The circumstances attending that elevation, which became immediately afterwards a subject of discussion in the House of Lords, I received on the same day when they took place, from Lord George's own mouth; and they are too curious, as well as characteristic, to be omitted in these Memoirs. The separation between the Sovereign and the Secretary, was by no means unaccompanied with emotion on both sides; which became probably augmented by the dark

cloud overhanging the throne, together with the circumstances that produced the necessity for Lord George's resignation. The King, who could not shut his eyes to these facts, doubtless foresaw the possibility, if not probability, of greater changes in the Administration, as imminent; of which, the removal of the American Secretary, was only the forerunner and the presage. After regretting the unfortunate events that had dictated the measure, and thanking Lord George for his services, His Majesty added, "Is there any "thing that I can do, to express my sense of "them, which would be agreable to you?" "Sir," answered he, "if Your Majesty is "pleased to raise me to the dignity of the "Peerage, it will form at once the best re-"ward to which I can aspire, and the best "proof of your approbation of my past ex-"ertions in your affairs." "By all means," said the King, "I think it very proper, and "shall do it with pleasure." "Then, Sir," rejoined Lord George, "if you agree to my "first request, I hope you will not think it "unbecoming, or unreasonable in me, to ask "another favor. It is to create me a *Viscount*, "as should I be only raised to the dignity of "a *Baron*, my own Secretary, my Lawyer,

" and my father's Page, will all take rank of " me." The King expressing a wish to know the Names of the Persons to whom he alluded, " the first," replied Lord George, " is Lord Walsingham, who, as Your Ma-" jesty knows, was long Under-Secretary " of State in my Office, when Mr. de " Grey. The second is Lord Loughborough " who has been always my legal adviser. Lord " Amherst is the third, who, when Page to " my father, the late Duke of Dorset, has " often sat on the braces of the State Coach " that conveyed him, as Lord Lieutenant of " Ireland, to the Parliament House at Dub-" lin." The King smiled, adding, " What " you say, is very reasonable, it shall be so; " and now let me know the title that you " choose." " I have already, Sir," answered Lord George, " in the possible anticipa-" tion of Your Majesty's gracious dispositions " towards me, spoken to the Duke of Dorset, " and obtained his permission, as the head of " my family, to take the title of *Sackville*; " having been compelled to renounce my " own name, in order to avail myself of the " bequest of the Estate of Drayton in North-" amptonshire, made me by Lady Betty Ger-" main, in her Will. I shall therefore in some

" degree recover it by this means." I quite " approve of that idea," replied His Majesty, " and if you will state to me your title, I " will write it down myself, before we part, " and send it directly to the Chancellor." The King immediately placed himself at a table, took the pen and ink lying upon it, and having committed the *Viscounty* to paper, asked him what *Barony* he chose? Lord George answered, " that of Bolebrook in Sus- " sex, being one of the most ancient estates " belonging to his family; and contiguous to " Buckhurst, the original Peerage conferred " by Queen Elizabeth, on his ancestor, the first " Earl of Dorset." When the King had copied it, he rose up, and with the most condescending expressions of concern, as well as of satisfaction, allowed Lord George to withdraw from the Closet. As this is one of the few Peerages, which, in the course of half a Century, George the Third has been allowed to confer, wholly independant of ministerial intervention or recommendation, from the impulse of his own inclinations, its origin and creation attain an additional interest.

No sooner had the intention of calling up Lord George Germain to the House of

Peers, become publicly known, than the Marquis of Carmarthen immediately brought forward the subject before that Assembly. He endeavoured to shew, that it would be derogatory to their honour, as a body, to admit among them a person still labouring under the sentence of a Court Martial: and though his motion was rejected by a great majority, on the 7th of February; yet he renewed the attack as soon as Lord George had taken his seat, on the 18th of the same month. Conceiving that Lord North must, as first Minister, have advised the measure, the Marquis attempted to involve him in the responsibility or culpability of giving such advice to the Crown. But, Lord Sackville having exculpated the First Lord of the Treasury, from any participation whatever in the transaction, gave the House clearly to understand, that it flowed solely from the volition of the Sovereign. His enemies themselves confessed that never was a more able, dignified, or manly appeal made within the walls of the House of Peers, than Lord Sackville pronounced on that occasion. He observed, that even admitting in all its force, the justice of the sentence passed by the Court Martial, yet that Tribunal had only declared him "guilty

"of disobeying Prince Ferdinand of Brunswic's orders; and therefore had adjudged "him *unfit* to serve His Majesty in any *military* capacity whatever." But they neither had imposed, nor could they inflict upon him, any *civil* disability or incapacity. And the attempt of the King, or of the Minister of that time, to aggravate the nature or expressions of the sentence, by any harsh additions and personal comments, could not add to its force. If, after considering the *Sentence* published in the case of the General Officer, who commanded on the expedition sent in 1806, against Buenos Ayres, we contemplate the tenor of the *Orders* that accompanied it; and then compare them with those used in the instance of Lord George Sackville; we shall perceive the contrast presented by the conduct of the two Sovereigns, in the strongest point of view. Though General Whitelock was adjudged to be "cashiered, and declared totally unfit *and unworthy* to serve His Majesty in any military capacity whatever:" consequently, though the sentence implies a much deeper degree of error or culpability, than was attributed to Lord George Sackville at Minden, as well as a fault far more clearly established and recognized; yet George the Third, unlike his predecessor, subjoins no

injurious reflections, but simply enjoins the publication of it, as a memorial and warning to other officers.

The Duke of Richmond, who took a very active part in the second Debate upon Lord Sackville's elevation to the Peerage, endeaed to prove, from the length of time which elapsed after his reception of Prince Ferdinand's Orders to advance, that disinclination only on his part to obey them, could have produced such a delay. As the Duke had been personally present at Minden, and as he declared that he held his watch within his hand, during the whole time lost in obeying the Prince's Orders, which, he asserted, amounted to an hour and a half; his speech might have been expected to make an impression on the House. But, only twenty-eight Peers could be found, on either Debate, to support Lord Carmarthen's motion; though the number voting against it rose from seventy-five to ninety-three, between the two Divisions, on the 7th and the 18th of February. It happened likewise, most unfortunately for the Duke of Richmond, that while he thus attempted to attack Lord Sackville's personal courage, his own lay under very general sus-

picion. He had brought forward, only a few days before, in the House of Peers, the case of an American Colonel Haynes, executed at Charlestown, under Lord Rawdon's authority, in the preceding year. The expressions or assertions which His Grace used, in relating this transaction, gave such offence to the Nobleman against whom they were levelled, that he soon afterwards called the Duke to a severe account. But, as he declined giving any individual satisfaction, Lord Rawdon compelled him to declare in his place, that by his accusation "he had not intended any "attack on Lord Rawdon's justice or huma-"nity." A declaration apparently at variance with his preceding charge. Lord Sackville was restrained by the exhortations and advice of Lord Amherst, from calling on the Marquis of Carmarthen to answer to him personally, for this double attack. I had the honour to know him before, as well as after, he became Duke of Leeds. He was a Nobleman highly accomplished, of the most pleasing manners, of very elegant deportment, of a lofty mind, and of considerable talents. But, the part which he took on this occasion, did not constitute the most commendable act of his political life. Posterity will form their

opinion on it, divested of prejudice. His contemporaries saw it merely through the optics of party, the most deceptive of all mediums. While only twenty-eight Peers supported the Motion on both occasions, nearly a hundred voted against it on the final Debate. These aggregate numbers appear indeed small *to us;* but we must recollect the limited extent of the Peerage, compared with the present times. It was neither Lord Bute, nor Lord North, but Mr. Pitt, who augmented the members of that House, if not with a profuse, yet unquestionably with an unsparing hand. In 1782 there were only one hundred and eighty-seven English Peers. We have now above three hundred.

While Lord Sackville was *personally* attacked in one House of Parliament, the Earl of Sandwich underwent no less severe an enquiry into his *official* conduct, as First Lord of the Admiralty, in the House of Commons. Fox, acting as his accuser, united the keenest sarcasms, with the most able and laborious investigation of the Naval Administration. He was supported in all his Charges, by Mr. Pitt, by Admiral Keppel, and by Lord Howe. Under this accumulation of talent

and of eloquence, the Minister labored hard to protect his Colleague: but the House began to manifest some indications of reluctance. Animated by such obvious symptoms of the decline of the influence which Lord North had exercised during so many years in that Assembly, the Opposition renewed their efforts. And if they did not overthrow, they at least shook to its base, the Ministry. After two Debates, protracted to a late hour, in the first of which, the Members present fell little short of four hundred, a Majority of only *twenty-two* appeared on the side of Administration. In the second Debate, on the 20th of February, where more than four hundred and fifty persons actually voted, a still smaller Majority, consisting only of *nineteen*, negatived Fox's proposition, attributing "gross "mismanagement" to the Nobleman at the Head of the Admiralty. Two such divisions, following close upon Lord Sackville's resignation, afforded ample triumph to the Minority, while they diffused proportionate apprehension among the adherents of Government.

I have heard it confidently asserted by persons who were conversant in the secret

History of those Times, that after the second Debate, Lord Sandwich received a proposition, the object of which was to induce him to give in his immediate resignation; offering him as a recompense for this service to the Crown and to Administration, the Order of the *Garter*, together with a Pension of four thousand Pounds a year for life. Lord Sandwich rejected the proposal, though coming from Lord North; and though the state of his private fortune was such, as by no means to place him above the necessity of looking to official situation. Such a rejection seems to prove that he entertained the most sanguine, though the most fallacious expectations, of the duration of Ministry. In less than six weeks afterwards, I saw his furniture carrying off from the Admiralty, of which, Keppel, just named his successor, was taking possession.

Every day, from this time down to the 20th of the subsequent Month, when Lord North suddenly threw up the Administration of affairs, was marked by the most violent exertions on both sides. Incredible efforts were made to procure attendance in Parliament. The Opposition, conscious that not a moment should be lost, gave the Minister no

respite. Scarcely forty-eight hours after the last Debate on Lord Sandwich, General Conway introduced a Motion for addressing His Majesty, " to renounce any further attempts " to reduce America by force." Notwithstanding the eloquence of the new Secretary of State, Mr. Ellis, who on this occasion displayed very considerable talents, it became impossible to induce the House to maintain the contest. Burke, in addition to all the arguments suggested by the nature of the subject, and the exhausted condition of Great Britain; oppressed the recently appointed Minister, under the flashes of intolerable wit, supported by the keenest ridicule. Never on any occasion was he more happy in his allusions, or more pointed in his irony. After felicitating Mr. Ellis on succeeding as heir to the noble Viscount, at whose feet he had been brought up, and whose political opinions he implicitly adopted; Burke compared him to a Caterpillar, who having long remained in a torpid state, within the silken folds of his lucrative employment as Treasurer of the Navy, now bursting his ligaments, fluttered forth, the Secretary of the Hour. Pursuing this comparison with inconceivable humour, he directed the whole force of his powerful mind,

in impelling his audience no longer to support a hopeless, ruinous, and unavailing conflict. On that night, the American War may indeed be said to have terminated; the question being carried on the part of Government, by only *one* vote, though near three hundred and ninety Members divided. Many of those who supported the Minister, seemed not less rejoiced at the apparent conclusion of the war, than the persons on the opposite side; and it has been supposed that Lord North himself, whose disinclination to prosecute hostilities beyond the Atlantic, was well known, did not really regret, though he was necessitated to oppose, the motion of General Conway. Far from manifesting any intention of laying down his office in consequence of it, he performed one of the most important functions of First Minister, only three days afterwards, by opening the *Budget*, and proposing a Loan, on the 25th of February. It is true that he postponed the task of stating the Taxes to be imposed; but he did not the less declare his determination to continue at the head of His Majesty's Councils: nor did those persons who were most in his confidence, either question his sincerity, or doubt his resolution.

It became, indeed, apparent from this time, that though a Majority of the House of Commons might be still disposed to support the Ministry, they were altogether weary of continuing that contest for the reduction of America, which during near seven years had produced only an accumulation of expence and of misfortune. But, on the other hand, the Opposition soon discovered, that the compulsory abandonment of the American War, and the resignation of Lord North, constituted by no means, as they had flattered themselves, things synonimous, or inseparable. When General Conway, encouraged by the event of his late Motion, brought the subject again before the House, he indeed out-numbered the Minister on the Division, by *nineteen*, leaving him thus in a Minority. He even carried without difficulty, an Address to the Throne, soliciting His Majesty "to "stop the prosecution of further offensive "war against the Colonies." But, the King, though he returned a gracious Answer, did not the less make a vague and general Reply to the Address, when it was presented to him by the whole House. Unable to resist the stream while it ran in this direction, Lord North no longer attempted it; and allowed

the Opposition, who on the subject of America constituted the Majority, to declare "enemies to His Majesty, and to their country, all those who should advise, or attempt "to prosecute offensive hostilities against the "Americans." Desirous to meet, and to anticipate their wishes, upon a point evidently so popular, he even permitted the Attorney-General to bring in a Bill, enabling the Crown to conclude a Truce, or a Peace, with the Colonies. Under these critical circumstances the month of March opened, while the minds of all men were attracted towards the termination of a scene so interesting to every individual; but, the issue of which it was as yet impossible to foresee, from the conduct or the protestations of the First Minister.

March.] Unable to effect his removal, or to provoke his voluntary resignation, by any censures passed on the conduct of the American War, or by any interdictions of its future prosecution; the Opposition became of necessity compelled to bring forward a personal Question, inculpating Administration. And it must be allowed that in conducting this measure, they proceeded with judicious, as

well as with cautious steps. A retrograde movement, or an unsuccessful attempt, they were well aware, would at once undo all that had hitherto been effected. Lord North, who was individually beloved, in and out of the House, even by those who most disapproved or opposed many of his measures; was likewise steadily supported by the Sovereign: while in the House of Lords, no prospect of any defection or change had hitherto manifested itself. The Session moreover advanced rapidly; and if Easter arrived, experience had proved that a full attendance could not be obtained after that period of the year, except with the utmost difficulty. All these facts having been maturely considered in the Meetings which took place among the Opposition Leaders, they determined to try the temper of the House of Commons, without delay. On the 8th of March, Lord John Cavendish, seconded by Powis, (then Member for Northamptonshire, since raised by Pitt, to the Peerage,) introduced various Resolutions, imputing the misfortunes of the war, to the "want of foresight and ability" in Ministers. After a very long Debate, in a crowded House, the Administration not venturing directly to negative the Proposition, yet found themselves

unable to carry the Motion, though only for the Order of the Day, by a greater Majority than *ten*. It might have been supposed that a Government which rested on so precarious a Basis, was already virtually at an end. But, Lord North gave the best indication, as it was considered, of his own intention to remain in Office, by proposing, only three days afterwards, the new Taxes which he meant to impose for the service of the year. The contending Parties, therefore, prepared for new struggles; and from every part of the kingdom, as well as from foreign Courts, attendance was procured. The duration of the Ministry being now evidently at issue, and probably about to be decided in a very short time, not exceeding three weeks; it is difficult to convey an idea of the anxiety which agitated the Court, the Capital, and the Country.

The last Debate which preceded Lord North's resignation, took place on the 15th of March; it being moved on the part of Opposition to declare, that "the House had "no farther confidence in Ministers." They imagined that if this Motion was carried, no Administration would venture to continue in

Office; or that if they should be bold enough to defy the indignation of Parliament, the same Majority would next address the Crown for their removal. There then remained only one step more to Impeachment. But, so equally balanced were the contending Parties, that though four hundred and sixty-three Members voted on the Division, scarcely any ground was lost or gained on either side. Government still remained in a Majority of *nine,* thus losing *one* since the preceding Debate. Yet, even that single Vote being in favor of the Opposition, seemed to indicate that they were progressive in the public esteem. Every artifice of Party was used to encourage their friends, and to terrify, or hold out to popular odium, the adherents of Administration. Lists were published, and disseminated throughout the kingdom, containing the names of the Members who voted on each Question; those voting on the side of Government being printed in *red* letters, while the names of the Minority appeared in *black.* Unimportant or contemptible as this circumstance may appear, it produced nevertheless a powerful effect on weak, or timid individuals; and bore some faint resemblance to the proceedings of the memorable Parlia-

ment which met in 1640, under Charles the First.

Lord North appeared likewise to entertain strong apprehensions respecting the consequences, which might ultimately result to the King, if not to himself, from the struggle in which Ministers were engaged. It was generally believed, that he had stated these fears to His Majesty with so much earnestness, and had so warmly depictured the painful situation in which the Sovereign might be personally involved, if his Cabinet should be taken by storm; as to have obtained the permission of negotiating, and even of surrendering *on terms*. Some of his expressions in the Debate of the 15th of March, which intimated his readiness or disposition to withdraw from Office, and not to form any impediment, if a Coalition could be formed for carrying on the public service; seemed to justify the belief, that he was authorized to make such propositions. They were, however, treated with affected ridicule or scorn, by his opponents, as only calculated for purposes of delusion, in order to weaken or distract their efforts. Far from listening to any overtures of accommodation, instant notice was given after the

Division of *nine*, that a Motion similar in its import, would be made on the subsequent Wednesday, being the 20th of March.

Never were moments more precious, or more critical. It being well known that the House of Commons would, according to regular usage, adjourn on the 28th of March, for ten or eleven days, till after the Easter Holidays, which in that year happened to fall early; Lord North consequently might calculate almost the number of hours that he had to hold out against his assailants: for, no sanguine expectation of successfully renewing their attack upon Ministry, after the Recess, could be entertained by the Opposition. Every thing therefore, it was evident, must necessarily be wound up within a week or two, and Government made the strongest demonstrations of abiding the issue. Between the 16th and the 20th of the Month, in every Department, positive assurances were given, that no compromise or resignation was intended. Robinson protested the same thing to me, at his house in St. James's-square. Lord North himself, whatever fluctuations of mind he might internally undergo, personally reiterated those declarations to his nearest

political connexions. No man on either side of the House, doubted the firmness of the Sovereign, or suspected him of abandoning his Ministers from personal timidity. Each Party therefore prepared to try their force, and both expressed themselves confident of success. I can assert, however, from the best authority, that if the contest had been maintained, it would, according to every probability, have terminated in favor of Administration. Robinson, then Secretary of the Treasury, and who knew better than any man, the Secret of affairs, has many times assured me, that Government would have infallibly divided *from fourteen to twenty* Majority, on the day when Lord North resigned; Robinson having received the written assurances of attendance and support, from many Members who were absent on the Question of the 15th. Even various of the country gentlemen who had hitherto voted with Opposition, hesitated, or refused to push the contest to the utmost extremity. They had put an end to the American War, which they reprobated; and they wished for a change of men, as well as of measures, and of system: but they wished it with moderation, and were averse to using the last expedients which the

British Constitution admits, lest the Constitution, or the State itself, should suffer in the shock.

20th March.] On the other hand, I know from authentic channels of information, that Lord North, during the last four months of his continuance in Office, repeatedly tendered his resignation to the King; which His Majesty as often declined, accompanying his refusal with the most gracious and encouraging expressions. On Tuesday, the 19th of March, the First Minister, apprehensive of the event of the Debate which was fixed for the ensuing day in the House of Commons, wrote to the King in the most decided terms, resigning his employment; and His Majesty being down at Windsor, Lord North dispatched a Messenger with the letter. When it arrived, the King was going out to hunt: having perused its contents, for which he was probably not unprepared, he calmly put it in his pocket, made no observation, and mounted his horse. But he had not proceeded more than a few paces, when a Page came running after him, to say that Lord North's Messenger had received orders to bring back a Reply. "Tell "him," said the King, "that I shall be in

"town to-morrow morning, and will then "give Lord North an answer." Two Noblemen were with him at the time, one of whom was the late Duke of Dorset: the other, Lord Hinchinbrook, (afterwards Earl of Sandwich,) related to me these particulars. Turning immediately to them, — "Lord North," observed His Majesty, "has sent me in his "resignation; but I shall not accept it." If, however, the King was apprized of Lord North's intention or determination to resign, it was by no means known in London; and on the morning of the very day, I believe that few individuals of either Party, entertained a doubt of the continuance of the struggle. Still less did any person conceive, that the First Minister would spontaneously lay down his Office, without giving notice to his friends, and contrary to his own recent professions. He went soon after one o'clock, to the Treasury, from whence he was to repair to St. James's, where the King, as usual, had a Levee. Robinson told me, that previous to his quitting the Treasury, they held a long conversation together; in the course of which, he shewed Lord North on paper, the names of those Members who had promised to support him on the ensuing Question, to the

number of nine, ten, or eleven, at least; not one of whom had been present in the preceding Division. And he did not, himself, entertain the slightest suspicion of the First Minister's resignation, from whom he received the most satisfactory assurances of his intention, in every case, to abide the issue of the approaching Debate. After standing together at the fire in the Board-room, till Lord North's carriage drew up, they parted, about ten minutes after two o'clock; the Minister driving strait to St. James's, while the Secretary, after dispatching a variety of official business, repaired soon after four o'clock, to the House of Commons.

It is probable that the conversation which took place between the King and Lord North, on that occasion, was never minutely reported by either, to any third person: but we may safely assume that His Majesty endeavoured to prevail on his Minister not to abandon him. Robinson professed himself ignorant of all the particulars; though he entertained no doubt that Lord North, whether from weariness and disgust, or apprehension of the consequences that might accrue to his Sovereign, to himself, and to the Country, had made up his

mind as he drove to St. James's, to state at once to the King, the determination that he had irrevocably embraced, of laying down immediately his Power; a resolution which he had notified under his hand, on the preceding day. It is certain that the interview between them was long; lasting above an hour and a half, without any witness present; at the end of which time the Minister withdrew, in order to attend the House of Commons. I have rarely witnessed so full an attendance, at so early an hour, as on that day; not less than four hundred Members having taken their seats before five o'clock; both Parties appearing impatient to proceed to business. The only delay arose from the absence of the First Minister; and he being every instant expected to arrive from St. James's, all eyes were directed towards the door, each time that it opened. The Members on both Sides, who, it was generally expected, would speak in the course of the ensuing Debate, were well known; and as the ground of controversy had been so often gone over, as well as on account of many invalids who attended, and who were unable to remain long, it was thoulgt that the Question would be brought on before midnight.

At length Lord North entering in a full dressed suit, his Riband over his Coat, proceeded up the House, amidst an incessant cry of "Order, and Places." As soon as he had reached the Treasury Bench, he rose and attempted to address the Chair; but Lord Surrey, who had given notice of a motion for that day, being consequently in possession of the right to speak first, and having likewise risen, a clamour began from all quarters, of the most violent description. It lasted for some moments, in defiance of every effort made by the Speaker to enforce silence; 'till in consequence of the earnestness with which the Minister besought a hearing, and some expressions relative to the importance of the communication that he had to make, which pervaded the tumult, the Members opposite allowed him the precedence. He then stated, after a short preface, that "his object was "to save the time and trouble of the House, "by informing them that the Administration "was virtually at an end; that His Majesty "had determined to change his confidential "servants; and that he should propose an "Adjournment, in order to allow time for the "new Ministerial Arrangements which must "take place." It is not easy to describe the

effect which this declaration produced in a popular assembly, scarcely an individual of which did not hear it with lively sentiments of exultation, or of concern, both of which were heightened by surprize. No painter could have done justice to the expression depictured in many countenances. The Opposition, without much difficulty consented to the proposed Adjournment; and the Members, actuated by very opposite emotions, soon dispersed in all directions, to carry the intelligence through the capital. Not, however, till Burke, assuming the part of a Moderator, had endeavoured to temper and restrain the vociferous joy of his friends, on so sudden and unexpected an event. But scarcely could he obtain a hearing, amidst the impatience of men, who for the first time beheld before their eyes, the promised land. Courtney, on the other side of the House, pronounced a Panegyric, or more properly, an Encomium on the personal virtues and amiable qualities of the First Minister, which he did not suspend, on account of the violent indications of dissatisfaction exhibited from the Opposition Benches. A more interesting scene had not been acted within the walls of the House of Commons, since February, 1743, when Sir Robert Wal-

pole retired from power. Nor did that First Minister by any means display in the last moments of his political life, the equanimity, suavity, and dignity manifested by his successor. Lord North ordered his Coach to remain at the House of Commons in waiting, on that evening. In consequence of so unexpected an event as his resignation, and the House breaking up at such an early hour, the housekeeper's room became crowded to the greatest degree; few persons having directed their carriages to be ready before midnight. In the midst of this confusion, Lord North's Coach drove up to the door; and as he prepared to get into it, he said, turning to those persons near him, with that unalterable equanimity and good temper which never forsook him, "Good night, Gentlemen, you see what "it is to be in the secret."

However extraordinary and unexpected Lord North's resignation appeared at the moment when it took place; and however certain I esteem it, that he would have carried the question, on the evening when he laid down his office, by a larger Majority than had supported him on the preceding Debate of the 15th; yet it must be admitted that he could

assign, not only to himself, but to his Sovereign, and to the country at large, many cogent, if not unanswerable reasons, for retiring from Power. The nation, he well knew, was universally weary of a war, the misfortunes that had attended which, though perhaps justly imputable to many other causes or persons, were attributed principally to his errors or mismanagement. He beheld himself now engaged in hostilities, direct or indirect, with half Europe, in addition to America. Ireland, availing itself of our embarrassments, loudly demanded commercial and political emancipation. On every side, the Empire appeared to be crumbling into ruin. Minorca, long invested, had already surrendered, after a defence protracted to the last extremity. Gibraltar was closely besieged. In the East Indies, our difficulties, financial, as well as military, threatened the total subversion of our wide extended authority in that quarter of the Globe; where Hyder Ally, though expelled by Sir Eyre Coote, from the vicinity of Madras, still maintained himself in the Centre of the Carnatic. If the First Minister looked to the West Indies, the prospect appeared still more big with alarm. St. Christopher's, attacked by the Marquis de Bouillé,

might be hourly expected to surrender; and he had already re-captured St. Eustatius, either by surprize, or by corrupting the officer who commanded the garrison. Of all the chain of Carribbee Islands which had belonged to the Crown of Great Britain at the commencement of the War, only Antigua and Barbadoes remained. Such was our maritime inferiority, that Sir Samuel Hood, whose abilities had been vigorously exerted, at the head of the Fleet, to defend St. Christopher's, found himself unable to hazard an engagement with De Grasse. Rodney had indeed sailed from England, with a considerable reinforcement, in the month of January, to join the British Admiral at Barbadoes. But Lord North could not foresee, nor did his most sanguine adherents venture to predict, the splendid victory which Rodney obtained over De Grasse, scarcely more than three weeks after the resignation of the Minister.

Far from anticipating any such event, the most alarming apprehensions were entertained relative to the safety of Jamaica itself. If the combined Fleets of France and Spain in the West Indies, after the reduction of St. Christopher's, should effect a junction, they would

have exceeded fifty sail of the line; while Rodney's whole force scarcely amounted to more than thirty. And it was very doubtful whether such a junction could be prevented. The loss of Jamaica would complete the measure of the national calamities, by involving our commerce and our finances in almost total ruin. Under such an accumulation of defeat and of disaster, the vengeance of the country might demand some victim; and the leaders of Opposition, though neither sanguinary nor vindictive in their disposition, might be compelled to yield to the torrent of popular indignation. Fox, as well as Burke and Barré, had in fact many times alluded to the Axe and the Block, amongst the opprobrious Epithets that they lavished on the Ministerial errors; and such menaces might be realized in a moment of national depression or violence. The Crown might be even unable to extend protection to its servants; and the scenes of the year 1641, might be renewed under the reign of George the Third. That this picture is not exaggerated, the history of the period which I am writing, sufficiently proves; and however exempt from personal pusillanimity or apprehension we may suppose Lord North to have been, it was impossible that he could

avert his view from these considerations, or not allow them their due weight over his mind. Though it seems to be indisputable, that his final resolution to resign, was at last somewhat suddenly embraced, yet the motives which led to it, had unquestionably long existed, and may fully explain, as well as justify, his conduct.

The King, thus abandoned by his Minister, as he had repeatedly been deserted at earlier periods of his reign, by other Ministers, chose that evil which he esteemed to be the least in his situation. Well acquainted with the discordant materials of which the Opposition was composed, he sent to Lord Shelburne, to signify a desire of conferring with him, on the formation of a new Administration; and when that Nobleman attended His Majesty for the purpose, the King proposed to him to accept the place of First Lord of the Treasury. But, Lord Shelburne, however disposed from inclination, to comply with an offer so flattering to his ambition, felt too deeply conscious of his inability to maintain himself in Power, independant of the Rockingham party, to venture on its acceptance. Having stated therefore, the necessity under which he lay of declining

so gratifying a distinction, at least for the present; he urged the over-ruling circumstances that left no alternative to the Crown, except placing the Marquis of Rockingham at the head of the Ministry. Sensible that he must submit to the measure, however painful, the King therefore, on the subsequent day, desired Lord Rockingham's attendance. At the Audience which took place, His Majesty consented to the conditions on which the Marquis insisted, before he would agree to accept office; only attempting to stipulate as a Preliminary, that two of his actual Ministers, namely, the Chancellor and Lord Stormont, should be continued under the new Administration. He could not however obtain such terms; nor was it without great repugnance, and after considerable difficulty, that even Lord Thurlow was admitted to retain his situation. A decided negative was put on the other Nobleman, whom it was determined by the Rockingham Party, at all events to exclude from any place in the Cabinet.

The Leaders of that powerful body were nevertheless far from having surmounted all the impediments to their acquisition of Office; and they soon discovered that the expulsion

of Lord North, though it might open to them the door of the Cabinet, by no means secured the durability of their Administration. From the first moment that the new competitors for Power appeared at St. James's, inextinguishable jealousies arose, and mutual distrust manifested itself on every occasion. With difficulty could they be prevented from immediately proceeding to an open rupture; and the external appearances of political union, which had been preserved during several years of parliamentary Opposition, dissolved as soon as they came to divide the ministerial objects of plunder, or to dispute for preferance in the royal favor. The Marquis of Rockingham, conscious that though he might ostensibly be placed at the head of the new Administration, yet the King regarded him and his adherents with sentiments of alienation; while he considered Lord Shelburne with regard, and treated him with confidence; took umbrage at the distinction. In this situation of affairs, before the formation of the new Cabinet, an incident which displayed the superior interest that Lord Shelburne possessed at Court, nearly terminated at once the compact by which Lord North had been

expelled, and consequently involved the whole Embrio Ministry in total confusion.

Scarcely could the Ministry be said indeed with propriety, as yet to have any real existence; for though Mr. Fox and Lord Shelburne had been named Secretaries of State; and though Lord Camden had accepted the Presidency of the Council, while the Duke of Grafton was made Privy Seal; yet neither the new Boards of Treasury nor of Admiralty were constituted. Lord John Cavendish alone had been sworn in, as the new Chancellor of the Exchequer; but the Marquis of Rockingham, and Admiral Keppel, who were destined to preside at the two Boards, were not as yet regularly appointed. The post of Commander in Chief of the Forces, as well as the Master General of the Ordnance, both which had commonly or frequently been Cabinet offices, still remained vacant. No individual had been proposed to be raised to the Peerage; when Lord Shelburne availing himself of the facility which he enjoyed of access to the Sovereign, induced His Majesty to confer the dignity of a Baron, on his friend and adherent, Dunning. The business itself, which neither the King, nor Lord Shelburne, communicated to the Marquis

of Rockingham; was managed with such dexterity, as well as silence and dispatch, that the first intimation received of it, even by the persons about the Court, arose from Dunning's kissing the King's hand at the Levee, on his Creation. But, no sooner had the intelligence become known, than it produced the most violent fermentation and resentment among all the Rockingham Party. Considering their Chief as equally overreached and insulted by the proceeding, since it was evident that Lord Shelburne could effect for his followers, objects of the highest importance, which proved to the Public his superior and exclusive Ascendancy at St. James's; they determined on exacting immediate reparation.

Under this impression, several of the leading persons, among whom were Fox, Burke, and George Byng, having repaired to Lord Rockingham's house in Grosvenor-square, a sort of tumultuary consultation was there held on the occasion. They unanimously agreed that the First Lord of the Treasury would be at once dishonoured in the Cabinet, and disgraced in the public estimation; if the Secretary of State, so much his inferior in official rank, could thus, without his knowledge or

participation, dispose of the highest dignities to his own adherents. It was maintained that the reparation ought to be no less public, than the affront; and that in order to wipe it away, some individual must be without delay raised to the Peerage, at Lord Rockingham's personal recommendation. This resolution being adopted, it was next debated whom to choose for the honor. The selection fell on Sir Fletcher Norton, late Speaker of the House of Commons; not indeed, from inclination, but from necessity; no other person appearing so proper to be created a Peer at the same time with Dunning, as Sir Fletcher; they being, both, Lawyers of great eminence in their profession, Members of the House of Commons, and rival Candidates for Power or Office.

On the following day, Thursday, the 28th of March, the new First Lord of the Treasury repaired therefore to St. James's. Having obtained an audience of the King, he represented the impossibility of his continuing at the head of the intended Administration, after the elevation of Mr. Dunning to a Peerage, on Lord Shelburne's recommendation, unless His Majesty should be graciously

pleased to confer the same mark of royal favor on one of his own friends. After some hesitation, the King, apprehensive of the consequences, to himself and to the public tranquillity, if Lord Rockingham and his followers should suddenly resign, as they menaced; and aware that Lord Shelburne could not support himself alone; signified his assent to the proposition: adding, that the person named, Sir Fletcher Norton, might kiss his hand at the first Levee. But, the Marquis peremptorily insisted on that ceremony immediately taking place on the same day. In vain the King stated the singularity and impropriety of such an act, contrary to all the usages of established Court Etiquette, inasmuch as no individual ever was known to be presented at the Queen's Drawing Room, by whatever Title, till he had previously been received under that denomination, at the Levee. Lord Rockingham signified in Reply, respectfully, but tenaciously, that every Form must give way on the present occasion; and he exacted compliance. Sir Fletcher being brought forward, actually kissed His Majesty's hand on his Creation as a Baron, by the title of Lord Grantley, the same day, in the Drawing Room, to the no small astonishment

of the oldest Courtiers; and hardly less so of the newly created Peer himself, who having been apprized of this extraordinary Elevation, attended for the purpose at St. James's, on the previous notice of only a few hours. No instance of such a breach of established usage has occurred, either before or since, in the course of the present Reign.

April.] This subject of contest being thus regulated, and the Rockingham Party triumphant, the new Administration was at length formed, though of very heterogeneous materials. Instead of *nine* individuals who constituted Lord North's Cabinet, *eleven* were now admitted; the third Secretaryship of State, namely that for the Colonies, lately occupied by Lord Sackville, being extinguished. General Conway, as the recompense of his late distinguished services in Parliament, was placed at the head of the Army. The separation of the Office of First Lord of the Treasury, from that of Chancellor of the Exchequer, made way for Lord John Cavendish's entrance into the Cabinet; and the introduction of the Master General of the Ordnance, who had not been admitted under Lord North, brought in the Duke of Rich-

mond: while, in order to oppose some little balance to the preponderating ascendancy of the Marquis's friends, Lord Ashburton, contrary to general usage or precedent, was admitted to a Seat, in quality of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The other great objects of ambition or acquisition, were shared with tolerable equality, among the friends of the two principal Leaders. The Earl of Carlisle was replaced, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by the Duke of Portland. Rigby, who during near fourteen years had enjoyed the prodigious emoluments of the Pay Office, without any Colleague, relinquished that enviable and lucrative Post to Burke. Welbore Ellis, fallen in an instant from his double elevation of Secretary of State, and Treasurer of the Navy, made way for Barré in the latter employment: while Jenkinson was succeeded, as Secretary at War, by Mr. Thomas Townsend. Kenyon became Attorney General. We were Colleagues for the Borough of Hindon in that Parliament. He possessed a deep and recondite knowledge of the Law, the result of severe application; and was supposed to be consulted by the Chancellor, on all cases that arose of legal difficulty.

Little conversant with the manners of polite life, Kenyon retained, even when Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, to which high dignity he afterwards rose, all the original coarse homeliness of his early habits. Irascible in his temper, destitute of all refinement, parsimonious even in a degree approaching to avarice; he nevertheless more than balanced these defects of deportment and character, by strict morality, probity, and integrity. As a Member of the House of Commons, whenever he spoke, though he wanted grace, he could not be reproached with any deficiency in the essential qualities of perspicuity, energy, and command of language. General Burgoyne, whose exchange had at length been effected against Laurens, the late President of the American Congress; thus liberated from the inabilities which his surrender at Saratoga had inflicted on him, was sent to replace Sir John Irwin, as Commander in Chief in Ireland.

The Duke of Bolton, as a return for the service which he had rendered in the Session of 1781, by arraigning in the House of Peers, the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty, was made Governor of the Isle of Wight. During his elder brother's life, when Lord Harry Pow-

lett, he had served in the Royal Navy, where, however, he had acquired no laurels; and he was commonly supposed to be the "Captain Whiffle" described by Smollett, in his "Roderick Random." Sheridan received the appointment of one of the Under Secretaries of State in Fox's Office; who having taken for himself the *foreign* Department, left the *home* Secretaryship to Lord Shelburne; a partition by no means grateful to the latter. Of all the ostensible Candidates for employment, whose birth and talents seemed to call him forward to the service of the State, and whose eloquence in Parliament, had eminently conduced to the triumph obtained over the late Administration, Mr. Pitt alone remained without post or situation. Not that the new Ministers manifested either insensibility to his merits, or indifference to securing such abilities in their immediate support. On the contrary, as the best proof of their consideration, they offered him the place of a Lord of the Treasury, in the formation of the Board about to be constituted. But, in making him this proposition, they appeared to have ill appreciated his character, and least of all to have understood the extent, as well as the depth, of his ambition. Pitt steadily rejected every solicitation, preferring to remain for the

present, without Office. Whether this refusal originated in his consciousness of possessing talents, which, from their pre-eminence, enabled him at once to seize a Cabinet place, without passing, like other men, through any inferior gradations of political life; or whether it rather proceeded from that superior intelligence and discernment, which, even at so early a period of youth, shewed him that a Ministry imbued with such discordant principles, and odious to the Sovereign, could not possibly prove of long duration, it may be difficult to determine with certainty. Probably, both these sentiments concurred in regulating this judicious line of action.

8th April.] Never was a more total change of Costume beheld, than the House of Commons presented to the eye, when that assembly met for the dispatch of business, after the Easter Recess. The Treasury Bench, as well as the Places behind it, had been for so many years occupied by Lord North and his friends, that it became difficult to recognize them again in their new Seats, dispersed over the Opposition Benches, in great coats, frocks, and boots. Mr. Ellis himself appeared for the first time in his life, in an undress. To contemplate

the Ministers their successors, emerged from their obscure lodgings, or from Brookes's, having thrown off their blue and buff uniforms; now ornamented with the appendages of dress, or returning from Court, decorated with swords, lace, and hair powder; excited still more astonishment. Even some degree of ridicule attached to this extraordinary and sudden Metamorphosis, which afforded subject for conversation, no less than food for mirth. It happened that just at the time when the change of Administration took place, Lord Nugent's house in Great George-street having been broken open, was robbed of a variety of articles; among others, of a number of pairs of laced ruffles. He caused the particulars of the effects stolen, to be advertized in some of the daily Newspapers, where they were minutely specified with great precision. Coming down to the House of Commons immediately after the Recess, a Gentleman who accidentally sat next to him, asked his Lordship, if he had yet made any discovery of the articles recently lost? "I can't say that I have," answered he, "but I shrewdly suspect that I have seen "some of my laced ruffles, on the hands of "the Gentlemen who now occupy the Trea- "sury Bench." This Reply, the effect of

which was infinitely encreased by the presence of Fox and Burke in their Court dresses, obtained general circulation, and occasioned no little laughter.

Even the Drawing Room at St. James's, underwent considerable Alteration in its appearance, as well as the House of Commons, in consequence of the political Revolution which had driven the late Ministers from Power. The Earl of Hertford, one of the "antient, most "domestic ornaments" of the Court, who had held the White Wand of Chamberlain for more than fifteen years, and whose presence in the Circle seemed almost essential to its very existence; of course disappeared. The Duke of Manchester succeeded him. Lord Effingham, whose name, since the Riots of June, 1780, had scarcely been pronounced on the theatre of public life, became Treasurer of the Household, in the place of Lord Salisbury. No individual, dismissed in consequence of the change of Administration, was more personally regretted by the King, than Lord Bateman, who had held during many years, the Post of Master of the Buck Hounds. The frankness and gaiety of his disposition, rendered his society peculiarly agreeable to the Sovereign. Lord

Bateman's descent on the maternal side, was very illustrious; his mother having been Grand Daughter to John, Duke of Marlborough, and sister to the second Duke of that name. By his paternal ancestors, he inherited only civic honors, his grandfather Sir James Bateman being knighted when Lord Mayor of London, under George the First. At near seventy years of age, Lord Bateman preserved all the activity of youth, accompanied by an elasticity of mind and character which never forsook him. He might have been reinstated in the employment of Master of the Buck Hounds, under succeeding Administrations: but he preferred the enjoyment of personal liberty, and passed the last years of his life principally at his seat of Shobden, in the County of Hereford. His understanding was good, but he loved pleasure of every description, more than business; and he possessed that mediocrity of talents, which never inspiring awe, forms the best recommendation to royal favour. Curiosity was so strongly excited to see the new Ministers, and to remark the demeanor of persons, who during many years had rarely stood in the presence of the Sovereign, or frequented St. James's; that numerous individuals attended the Levee and the Drawing-

room, from no other motive. Those who had always speculated on the short duration of the present Administration, derived additional proofs in favor of their opinion, from the very looks and reciprocal deportment of the principal personages. Every attention shewn by the King to Lord Shelburne, excited the instant jealousy of the Rockingham Party, and hastened their final separation. Time alone, indeed, was necessary for making the political arrangements, indispensable before the former Nobleman could venture to throw off his subjection to his Colleagues, and to set up for himself, as First Minister.

April.] Previous to Lord North's resignation of power, Mr. Fox had more than once insinuated or maintained in the House of Commons, that if he were Minister, he possessed the means of making a separate Treaty with the Dutch, and of detaching them from France. His friends did not even scruple to assert, that "he had a Peace with Holland in "his pocket;" and these expressions, uttered in a period of misfortune and despondency, could not fail of producing a forcible impression on the sanguine, as well as on the credulous, part of society. One of his first attempts,

as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, became in fact directed to the attainment of so salutary and important an object. In order to effect it, he thought proper to address a letter to the Russian Minister then residing at the Court of London, making through him, the offer of an immediate suspension of hostilities between Great Britain and Holland, as a step preparatory to negotiation. This proposal was afterwards warmly reiterated and seconded, by the Embassadors of Catherine the Second at the Hague. But, instead of the nation deriving any benefit from Fox's hasty overture, it was received by the States General with coldness, and treated with contempt; they wisely preferring to negotiate in concert with France and Spain, whenever a plan for general Pacification should be set on foot. Baffled in this experiment, the Cabinet next made propositions at the Court of Versailles, for an accommodation, and even sent Mr. Thomas Grenville to Paris, for the purpose: while Admiral Digby and Sir Guy Carleton were dispatched to America, with instructions to offer an immediate acknowledgment of the independance of the thirteen Colonies. The Congress, however, as if animated by the same spirit with the Dutch, refused to receive any

Messenger, or even to grant a passport to the person deputed by the British Commissioners, for commencing a negotiation. It seemed impossible for the new Ministers to begin their foreign diplomatic labors under more unpromising Auspices, after having held out to the country such delusive expectations.

They found it much easier to induce the House of Commons to listen to their Propositions, than to persuade or to conciliate any of the belligerent Powers. No opposition whatsoever was experienced from Lord North, who, though at the head of a routed Party, yet remained the nominal chief of a numerous body of men. He attended in his place, and might, if he had been so disposed, have greatly impeded, if not wholly prevented, many of the measures of the new Government. But, far from throwing any obstacles in their way, he allowed them without molestation to complete their projects of Reform, in every direction. Burke opened the System of domestic Retrenchment, by bringing in anew his famous Bill for the Reduction of the civil List, so often proposed, and so often rejected, or eluded, in preceding Sessions. But "quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!" Instead of

two hundred thousand Pounds a-year, which by a species of political Arithmetic, he had calculated in 1779, would annihilate ministerial influence in the House of Commons, commensurate to fifty Members or Votes in Parliament; he now proposed only about a third part of that annual sum for the scope of his reduction. Many retrenchments that had appeared to be indispensable, while he was in Opposition, were abandoned when he spoke from the Treasury Bench. Some abuses owed their prospective toleration to the personal respect that, he said, he felt for the Individuals who presided over the office or department. Others were perpetuated from deference to prejudice, or popular predilection. The Ordnance might be safely trusted to the Duke of Richmond's vigilant frugality. Lord Ashburton extended his protection to the Duchy of Lancaster. The Mint was left untouched; and even some of the white Wands, as contributing to the splendor of the Court, obtained grace. Yet, thus mutilated, and hardly recognizable, both Burke, and Powis, who seconded the motion for an Address of Thanks to the King, on his Message relative to this subject, melted into Tears, at the prospect of their approaching Triumph over Court Profusion and Corruption.

Two Bills, one for the prevention of Contractors sitting in Parliament; the other, for excluding Officers of the Excise and Customs from voting at Elections; were likewise passed with little difficulty or delay, through the lower House, where the Administration carried all before them. But, in the House of Peers, they experienced from the Chancellor, as well as from Lords Mansfield and Loughborough, the most decided Opposition. These Pillars of the Law, far from yielding to the temper of the Times, endeavoured, though ineffectually, to stem its force. Thurlow in particular, even while holding in his hand the great Seal of England, and in his own person a Member of the Cabinet, yet expressed with that gloomy indignation which characterized his style of speaking, the disapprobation that he felt at such inroads on the majesty of the Crown, as well as on the franchises of the Subject. Unawed by the appearance of Fox and Burke, who, in order to impress him with respect, as well as to display the interest that they took in the success of these Measures, usually appeared in the House of Peers, on the steps of the Throne, while the Bills were agitating; Lord Thurlow animadverted on them with the utmost severity, and divided in the Minority,

on all the most obnoxious clauses. But the stream, which ran with too much violence, successfully to oppose its current, soon secured for each of the Bills, the concurrence of the Sovereign.

It cannot be disputed by the greatest enemies of Reform, that various of the offices, or nominal employments, suppressed by Burke's Bill, were become obsolete, destitute of any real function, and void of apparent utility. Nor will it be denied, that the annual aggregate sum which the measure saved to the country, though now reduced from two hundred thousand Pounds, to about seventy thousand Pounds a-year, yet still formed a considerable object of national economy. But, on the other hand, the extinction of so many places, deprived the Crown of that species of majesty, produced by the operation of time, and "the hoar of ages;" advantages which no man knew better how to appreciate and to venerate, as well as to celebrate and sustain, than Burke himself. We beheld him, scarcely ten years afterwards, stand forward the determined champion of monarchical institutions, and the zealous opposer of almost every kind of innovation. We may likewise

remark, that the Board of Trade, and the office of Third Secretary of State, both which his Bill abolished, have been since revived, from a conviction of their respective necessity or advantages. Even the "Great Wardrobe," the "Treasurer of the Chamber," the "Jewel Office," the "Clerks of the "Board of Green Cloth," and some other appointments, which may appear to be most exceptionable or unnecessary; yet, as carrying us back in imagination to the reigns of the *Tudors*, by whom they were instituted, diffused over the Throne itself, a Gothic grandeur, calculated to protect and to perpetuate the sanctity of the monarchical office. These adventitious aids will not be despised by those who deeply consider the nature of man, and of all human institutions. Other consequences of an injurious description, not foreseen at the time, or from which the author of the Bill chose to avert his view, have flowed from the measure. In Burke's eagerness to diminish the supposed overgrown influence of the Crown, arising from the distribution of offices among the Members of the House of Commons, a greater injury has been probably sustained by the British Constitution. The Minister, deprived of the means of pro-

curing parliamentary attendance and support, by conferring places on his adherents, has in many instances been compelled to substitute a far higher remuneration; namely, Peerages. A review of Mr. Pitt's Administration, will form the strongest illustration of this remark. I know indeed, from the best authority, that Burke himself lived to adopt the opinion, and like other reformers or innovators, found reason to lament the effects of his own Bill. Being at Bath, in a declining state of health, not long before his decease, the conversation turned on the great augmentation made by Mr. Pitt to the numbers of the House of Lords, during the preceding thirteen years. "I fear," said Burke, "that I am partly accountable for so "disproportionate an increase of Honours, "by having deprived the Crown and the "Minister of so many other sources of re-"compence or reward, which were extin-"guished by my Bill of Reform." Mr. Pitt had in fact little left him to bestow, in proportion to the croud of claimants, except dignities; and he was not parsimonious in their distribution. The two Bills, excluding Contractors from sitting in the House of Commons, and depriving Custom-house or Excise Officers, of the right of voting at elec-

tions for Members of Parliament; though liable, respectively, to some objections; and though both were strongly reprobated at the time, by the greatest legal characters in the House of Peers; yet appear to have obtained, and still to retain, the general approbation of the country.

Many persons of high rank reluctantly disappeared from about the King's person and Court, in consequence of Burke's Bill of Reform. The Earl of Darlington quitted the Jewel Office; and Lord Pelham, the Great Wardrobe; the first of which Offices owed its institution to Elizabeth: while the latter remounted to the times of the *Plantagenets.* The Earl of Essex laid down the Stag Hounds; as did Lord Denbigh, the Harriers: while the disasters of Saratoga and of York Town were thus felt by rebound, through every avenue of St. James's. Gibbon, who had sat at the Board of Trade since 1779, being dismissed from his official attendance in Whitehall, found himself more at leisure to continue that great historical work which he ultimately compleated on the banks of the Lake of Geneva, and which will perpetuate his name to distant Ages. George Selwyn lost a lucrative appoint-

ment under the Board of Works; and though possessed of an affluent fortune, together with a Borough, yet as he loved money, no man who suffered in consequence of the reduction of the Civil List, retained a deeper resentment towards the party who had abridged his enjoyments, and diminished his income. I knew him with some degree of intimacy, having sat as his Colleague in Parliament, during more than six years, for Ludgershall, from 1784 to 1790. He resided in Cleveland Row, in the house rendered memorable by the quarrel which took place between Sir Robert Walpole and Lord Townsend, under the reign of George the First; when the first Minister and the Secretary of State seized each other by the throat: a scene which *Gay* is supposed to have pourtrayed in "The "Beggar's Opera," under the characters of Peachum and Lockitt. Selwyn was a Member of the House of Commons, during the greater part of his life; and down to the year 1780, he constantly represented Glocester, near which city he had a seat, at Matson. He told me, that during the memorable siege of Glocester, undertaken by Charles the First in 1643, Charles, Prince of Wales, and James, Duke of York, who both in turn ascended the Throne, but,

who were then boys, remained at Matson. And he added, that James the Second, after he came to the Crown, used frequently to mention the circumstance to his Grandfather when he went to Court; observing, "My "brother and I were generally shut up in a "Chamber on the second Floor at Matson, "during the day; where you will find that "we have left the marks of our confinement, "inscribed with our knives, on the ledges of "all the windows."

Selwyn possessed infinite wit. He had indeed succeeded to Philip, Earl of Chesterfield's Reputation for Bon Mots, most of which that then attained to any celebrity, were attributed to him. Their effect, when falling from his lips, became greatly augmented by the listless and drowsy manner in which he uttered them; for he always seemed half asleep: yet the promptitude of his replies was surprizing. The late Duke of Queensberry, who lived in the most intimate friendship with him, told me that Selwyn was present at a public dinner with the Mayor and Corporation of Glocester, in the year 1758, when the intelligence arrived of our expedition having failed before Rochfort. The Mayor turning to Selwyn, "You,

"Sir," said he, "who are in the ministerial "secrets, can no doubt inform us of the cause "of this misfortune?" Selwyn, though utterly ignorant on the subject, yet unable to resist the occasion of amusing himself at the enquirer's expence, "I will tell you in con"fidence the reason, Mr. Mayor," answered he; "the fact is, that the scaling ladders "prepared for the occasion, were found on "trial to be too short." This solution, which suggested itself to him at the moment, was considered by the Mayor to be perfectly explanatory of the failure, and as such, he communicated it to all his friends; not being aware, though Selwyn was, that Rochfort lies on the river Charante, some leagues from the sea-shore, and that our troops had never even effected a landing on the French coast.

But it was not so much as a man of wit that I cultivated his society. He was likewise thoroughly versed in our History, and master of many curious, as well as secret Anecdotes, relative to the Houses of Stuart and of Brunswic. As he had an aversion to all long Debates in Parliament, during which he frequently fell asleep; we used to withdraw sometimes to one of the Committee rooms up

stairs, where his conversation was often very instructive. Talking to him of the death and execution of Charles the First, he assured me that the Duchess of Portsmouth always asserted, as having been communicated to her by Charles the Second, that his father was not beheaded either by Colonel Pride, or Colonel Joyce; though one of the two is commonly considered to have performed that act. The Duchess maintained that the man's name was Gregory Brandon. He wore a black crape streched over his face, and had no sooner taken off the King's head, than he was put into a boat at Whitehall Stairs, together with the Block, the black cloth that covered it, the Axe, and every article stained with the blood. Being conveyed to the Tower, all the implements used in the decapitation, were immediately reduced to ashes. A purse containing a hundred broad pieces of gold was delivered to him, after which recompence he received his dismission. Brandon survived the transaction many years, but divulged it a short time before he expired. This account, as coming from the Duchess of Portsmouth, challenges great respect.

From his own Father, who had acted a conspicuous part during Sir Robert Walpole's

Administration, Selwyn knew many of the secret Springs of Affairs, under George the First and Second. He told me that the former of those Kings, when he came over here from Hanover in 1714, understanding very imperfectly the English language, found himself so weary while assisting at the Service in the Chapel Royal, that he frequently entered into conversation in French or German, with the persons behind him. Among the few individuals who had retained under the new Reign, the Places that they held or occupied about Queen Anne, was Dr. Younger, Dean of Salisbury. Anticipating the change of Sovereigns, he had applied with such success to render himself Master of the German Language, that he was continued in the office of Clerk of the Closet, which gave him great access to the King, behind whose chair he usually stood at Chapel. With Younger, His Majesty often talked during the Service; a circumstance, which as being indecorous, naturally excited much offence. Lord Townsend, then one of the Secretaries of State, animated by a sense of loyal affection, ventured to acquaint him that his deportment at Chapel, gave cause of regret, mingled with animadversion, to many of his most attached Subjects; beseeching him at the

same Time particularly to abstain from conversing with Dr. Younger. Far from resenting the freedom, His Majesty promised amendment; and Lord Townsend strongly enjoined the Clerk of the Closet to observe in future the most decorous Behaviour on his part. Finding however that they resumed or continued the same practice, Lord Townsherid sent Younger a positive order, as Secretary of State, directing him, without presuming to present himself again in the royal presence, to repair immediately to his Deanery. Dr. Younger, conceiving the injunction to proceed from the King, obeyed without remonstrance or delay; and the Secretary waiting on His Majesty, informed him that the Dean had received a kick from a horse which fractured his skull, of which accident he was dead. George the First expressed the deepest concern at his loss, and never entertained the most remote idea of the deception which had been practised on him. Several years afterwards, before which time Lord Townshend had quitted his employment, the King going down to review some regiments that were encamped on Salisbury Plain, the Bishop and Chapter of that city had the honour to be presented to him, and to kiss his hand. But, when Younger ap-

proached for the purpose, His Majesty, overcome with amazement at beholding again a man whom he had long considered as no more, could scarcely restrain his emotions. As soon however as circumstances permitted, he sent for the Dean into his presence, and a mutual explanation took place. Conscious of the rectitude and propriety of the motives which had actuated Lord Townsend in his conduct, he never expressed any sentiment of anger; but contented himself with promising Younger to confer on him a Mitre, as soon as an occasion should present itself: an assurance which he would have probably realized, if the Dean had not shortly afterwards been carried off by death.

Selwyn's nervous irritability, and anxious curiosity to observe the effect of dissolution on men, exposed him to much ridicule, not unaccompanied with censure. He was accused of attending all executions; and sometimes, in order to elude notice, in a female Dress. I have been assured that in 1756, he went over to Paris, expressly for the purpose of witnessing the last moments of Damien, who expired under the most acute torture, for having attempted the life of Louis the Fifteenth.

Being among the croud, and attempting to approach too near the Scaffold, he was repulsed by one of the executioners; but, having informed the person, that he had made the journey from London solely with a view to be present at the punishment and death of Damien, the man immediately caused the people to make way, exclaiming at the same time, "*Faites place pour Monsieur. C'est* "*un Anglois, et un Amateur.*" The Baron Grimm, in his "Correspondence," relates this story as having happened to Condamine. Mr. Pitt, in order to recompense Selwyn for the place of "Paymaster of the Works," of which he was deprived by Burke's Bill; made him in 1784, "Surveyor General of the Crown "Lands," which Office he retained till his decease, in 1790.

Wilkes, who during more than thirteen successive years, in various Parliaments, had vainly endeavoured to expunge from the Journals of the House of Commons, the memorable Resolutions relative to the Middlesex Election; after being so often foiled, at length attained his object. The Division upon this question, was attended with the singular circumstance of Lord North and Fox

dividing together in the Minority. The new Secretary of State, whose original political line of conduct, while supporting the Administration which he had recently expelled, and of which he once formed a part, made it sometimes difficult for him to maintain the appearance of consistency; affected to speak and to vote from the Treasury Bench, against Wilkes's Motion. Having, unfortunately given his ministerial sanction in early life, to various measures calculated for affixing parliamentary disapprobation on that celebrated Member of the House; he therefore probably thought, that a regard to his own character compelled him, however contradictory to his late line of declamation and of action, when haranguing his Constituents in Palace Yard; to abide by, and to attempt a justification of his conduct, relative to the Election for Middlesex. No public man, indeed, in my time, ever appeared to me to consider so little apology requisite for the contradictions and derelictions of his political principles; or seemed so completely to regard the House of Commons, as an Assembly fit for becoming the willing agents and instruments of every delusion, however gross or palpable, as Fox. The difficulties of the undertaking never de-

terred or intimidated him; and his splendid talents, which could lend to sophistry the colours of truth, emboldened him, by turns, to attack and to defend, according to the situation in which he stood, almost every position and tenet, either of monarchical authority, or of constitutional freedom.

18th April.] While the House of Commons was thus occupied in Measures of Reform, or engaged in retracting their past political errors; the new Ministers, as if they anticipated their speedy dismission, employed the precious moments of their precarious power, in distributing among themselves, without loss of time, the honours of the Crown. Four *Garters*, which had been found on the King's Table, unappropriated, at the time of Lord North's resignation, they naturally considered as lawful plunder. One only of the number fell to the share of the Sovereign, which he was allowed, though not without some difficulty, to confer on his third son, Prince William Henry, now Duke of Clarence. The remaining three were reserved for themselves, with a due regard to their respective consequence, party, and pretensions. Lord Rockingham having long since received the Order,

from the hands of George the Second; the Duke of Devonshire, as head of the Whig Party, was invested with one blue Riband, and the Duke of Richmond with another. Lord Shelburne took for himself, as was to be expected, the fourth *Garter*. A great person, who was present at the ceremony of the Investiture, observed with admirable discernment, that never did three men receive the Order in so dissimilar and characteristic a manner. "The "Duke of Devonshire" said he, "advanced up "to the Sovereign, with his phlegmatic, cold, "awkward air, like a clown. Lord Shelburne "came forward, bowing on every side, smiling, "and fawning, like a Courtier. The Duke of "Richmond presented himself, easy, unembar-"rassed, and with dignity, as a Gentleman."

The Earl of Ashburnham, who had been during more than six years Groom of the Stole laid claim to one of the *Garters*, under a promise which he asserted to have received from the King, and of which he endeavoured to enforce the performance. His royal Master, though he did not deny the engagement, pleaded his inability to fulfil it, under the actual cirumstances of his situation, which left him no longer any option in dis-

tributing the decorations in question. This excuse did not, however, satisfy Lord Ashburnham, who was said to have addressed to the King a letter of reproach on the occasion, couched in language rather too severe from a subject to his Sovereign, even if the cause of offence had been better proved, or more legitimate. His resentment at the supposed infraction of the royal word, impelled him to resign his Office; which, as being in the King's immediate family, and near his person, has always been considered exempt from ministerial interference. Lord Weymouth, who succeeded him, had acted a much more important part in earlier periods of His Majesty's reign, when he filled, during a very considerable time, the post of Secretary of State; and even held the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, for a few months, though he never crossed over to Dublin. He was a man of talents, highly convivial, whose conversation entertained and delighted: but in order to profit of his society, it was necessary to follow him to White's, to drink deep, of Claret, and to remain at table till a very late hour. "Junius," alluding to this well known circumstance, when addressing the Duke of Grafton, in June, 1771, says, referring to Lord Weymouth, "Yet he must "have bread, my Lord, or rather he must

"have wine. If you deny him the cup, there "will be no keeping him within the pale of "the ministry." Lord Gower, the Chancellor, and Rigby, were, through life, his intimate friends and companions. His application to business, by no means kept pace with his abilities, nor was he ever a popular minister. Indeed, if we except the first Mr. Pitt; Henry Bilson Legge, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer during about five months after His Majesty's Accession to the Throne; and perhaps we may add the Marquis of Rockingham; all three of whom were devolved on him by his Grandfather, or forced upon him by the Nation; George the Third cannot be said to have had any Minister, in any Department, previous to Lord North's resignation, who enjoyed popularity. We must except from the remark, Lord Camden, during the short time that he held the great Seal as Chancellor. Lord Weymouth attracted a considerable portion of the indignation which characterizes Junius's opening letter, written in January, 1769, for having officially signed the order which authorized the military to fire on the populace assembled in St. George's Fields. "Recovered from the errors of his youth, from "the distraction of Play, and the bewitching "smiles of Burgundy," says that writer,

"behold him exerting the whole strength of "his clear, unclouded faculties, in the service "of the Crown." He had preceded Lord Ashburnham, as Groom of the Stole, in 1775, and was succeeded by the Earl of Hillsborough, in 1779, as Secretary of State for the Home Department. Ten years afterwards, Pitt created Lord Weymouth a Marquis.

Though the Administration of which Lord North so long constituted the head, had ceased to exist, yet many of the Parliamentary Institutions which had originated under him, still continued in activity. Among the principal, might be esteemed the Secret Committee for enquiring into the state of the East India Company's affairs. The Lord Advocate of Scotland, as their Chairman, brought forward at this time, to the consideration of the House, various Reports, calculated to shew the causes, not only of the disgraces and calamities sustained in the Carnatic, but of the improper expenditure of blood and treasure in other parts of Hindostan. Sir Thomas Rumbold, late Governor of Madras, and two of his Colleagues, Members of the Council, became the first objects of public accusation. The second blow fell by rebound, on Sir

Elijah Impey, who, in his quality of Chief Justice of Bengal, was supposed, or asserted, in more than one instance, to have lent his legal aid and support to the Supreme Government, from self-interested motives, and for unjust, as well as pernicious purposes. Hastings himself, then Governor General of Bengal, and Hornby, Governor of Bombay, became implicated or involved in these criminations. Measures, adapted to the nature of the imputed offences, or misconduct of each of the above-mentioned persons, were adopted. Rumbold, who had arrived from India early in 1781, under circumstances that rendered him highly unpopular, was restrained from either leaving the kingdom, or from alienating his property, by Act of Parliament; and severer steps were meditated, or set on foot, in order to bring him to justice. He contrived nevertheless to protract the proceedings, and ultimately to elude all punishment. An address was presented to His Majesty, requesting him to recall Sir Elijah Impey from his judicial situation in India. Finally, resolutions, of a nature tending to hold out both Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornby, in their public capacity, as men who had committed acts of the most culpable or unjustifiable kind, were agreed to in the

House. But, the advanced period of the Session, and the unsettled state of domestic affairs in a Cabinet divided by Animosity, prevented or postponed the further prosecution of these interesting concerns, to the subsequent year.

On the other side the Atlantic, misfortune still accompanied the English arms. St. Christopher's, after a long and gallant defence, surrendered: the Islands of Nevis and Montserrat were lost. Even the valuable Settlements of Demerara and Essequibo, situate on the Continent of South America, which we had taken in the preceding year from the Dutch, were recaptured by France. Rodney, indeed, having arrived out, joined Sir Samuel Hood at Barbadoes: but he found himself unable to intercept, or to prevent, the arrival of a Convoy from Brest, which brought to the French Admiral, De Grasse, supplies the most essential for his projected hostile operations. At home, general despondency or apathy pervaded the country. Every allegation which had been brought forward against the late First Lord of the Admiralty while in office, was renewed with augmented violence, now that he had retired to private life; and these clamors were encouraged by the new Mini-

sters. Rodney himself participated largely in them; and disasters more severe than any that we had yet experienced, were predicted or anticipated, as about to happen in that quarter of the globe where he commanded. Never was the nation less prepared for, nor less in expectation of the great victory that impended in the West Indies, than a week, or even a day, before the intelligence arrived. It required the utmost exertions of the new Admiralty to prevent the Dutch squadron, which quitted the Texel at this time from effecting a junction with the combined fleets of France and Spain, commanded by Guichen. Lord Howe, now restored to the British Navy, and like Keppel, created a Viscount, effected a service so distinguished, which unquestionably entitled him to the gratitude of his country.

May.] If Mr. Pitt, whether from the dictates of profound ambition, or from the calculations of ordinary prudence, had thought proper to refuse accepting any place or situation under the new Ministry; he did not on that account, withdraw his individual exertions as a Member of Parliament, or retire in any degree from public view and admiration. On

the contrary, he came eminently forward at this time, as a Candidate for national approbation, in the delicate, as well as arduous character of a political Reformer. The spirit of the Times, which operated greatly in his favor, removed many of those obstacles, that might have impeded him under the former Administration. While Burke carried retrenchment into the Palace, as well as to the Table, of the Sovereign, Pitt aspired to renovate, or to re-organise, the national representation. In the progress of a speech, conceived with consummate ability, and delivered from the Treasury Bench, he endeavoured to shew the vices of the actual state of popular Election, and to point out the most efficacious or salutary remedies. The abuses alledged to exist, which were indeed indisputable, seemed at first sight loudly to demand redress. But, on the other hand, theory and practice might be found greatly at variance; and even the Reformers themselves, it was well known, differed widely in their ideas or opinions on the point. The Duke of Richmond, who carried his principles to an Utopian and visionary length, would have extended the right of voting, almost to the whole popula-

tion of Great Britain. Fox supported on this occasion, both with his Eloquence and his Vote, the plan proposed by Pitt: but Burke, less democratic in his ideas of Government, refused to lend his powerful aid to a Cause which he disapproved. The Secretary at War, Mr. Townsend, equally absented himself, as did others of the ministerial followers. Lord North, though he attended the discussion, and opposed all innovation, yet, to the surprise of his friends, took no active part in the Debate. Dundas, however, supplied his place, and made an animated Appeal against the projected Reform; as did Mr. Thomas Pitt, at great length, with much ability. The measure itself not being a party question, though of a nature the most interesting, by no means attracted the attendance which had been produced by the Motions that preceded the Dissolution of the late Administration. Scarcely more than three hundred Members voted upon it, while near five hundred had been present in more than one of the divisions of the Month of March. Pitt's proposition "to appoint a "Committee for enquiring into the State of "the National Representation," though it could only be considered as a preliminary

step, yet was negatived by a Majority of *twenty*.

I made one of that small Majority, and it is a Vote of which I never have repented. It was difficult not to reflect, while listening to the Arguments of Mr. Pitt, who eloquently depictured the corruption of the rotten Boroughs, among which, several, he said, "were to be considered as within the controul of the Carnatic;" that he was, himself, sitting at that very time, for Appleby, by the influence, or in other words, by the nomination of Sir James Lowther. To the corrupted State of the Representation, therefore, it was owing that he had himself obtained a place in the House of Commons. It was equally impossible not to be conscious, that if the Regulation which enacts, that every Member of that Assembly shall be *bona fide* possessed of three hundred Pounds per annum freehold estate, had been severely and literally enforced; neither Fox, nor Pitt, nor Sheridan, nor many other eminent individuals, could ever have sat in Parliament. Probably, indeed, on the day that Mr. Pitt made his Motion, he did not really possess any property; certainly, no landed property: and as to Fox, though ac-

tually Secretary of State, he was known to be plunged in debts, contracted by Play, which left him without fortune, or almost means of support. But they did not less constitute the two most distinguished persons of the Age in which they lived, the ornaments of their country in different lines. Fox always maintained without reserve, in private conversation, as well as in Parliament, that to enforce rigidly the rule relative to the Qualifications of Members, would be at once to exclude talents from obtaining entrance into the House. So little, indeed, may Speculation and Fact agree, that if the List of Representatives for the County of York, of Devon, or of Lincoln, ever since the reign of Elizabeth, were to be compared with those who have been sent to Parliament during the same period of time, from the vilest Cornish Borough, we shall find, that in every quality justly recommending to a seat in the Legislature; namely, high birth, extensive property, distinguished talents, or public principle and virtue; the superiority will be found, in many instances, perhaps in most, on the side of the persons elected for the Boroughs. Such an estimate might be difficult to make, and must be always, in some measure, open to dispute; but

it serves to prove, that various principles in Legislation, as well as various abuses, do not produce the effects which might naturally be expected to result from them.

18th May.] Scarcely had Mr. Pitt's proposition been rejected for the Reform of the Representation, before the Capital and the country were thrown into a delirium of joy, on receiving the intelligence of Rodney's Victory over De Grasse, gained upon the preceding 12th of April. It is difficult for us in this Age, who have been accustomed to naval advantages over the French; and who were used to calculate beforehand, on the destruction of every fleet that effected its escape from the ports of France, as soon as we could come up with them; to appreciate, or to imagine its effect on the public mind. We had been habituated, during so long a time, under Keppel, Byron, Hardy, Parker, Graves, Geary, Darby, and their successors, to indecisive or unfortunate engagements, productive of no beneficial results, that the nation began to despair of recovering its former ascendancy on the Ocean. In fact, during near twenty years, ever since the termination of the war with France in 1763, the British Flag had scarcely been any where

triumphant; while the Navies of the House of Bourbon, throughout the progress of the American contest, annually insulted us in the Channel, intercepted our mercantile Convoys, blocked our harbours, and threatened our coasts. Under these circumstances, the excess of the public exultation was prodigiously augmented by the dejection that pervaded all ranks during the former part of the Month of May, and by the utter apparent improbability of such an Event taking place.

When I reflect on the emotions to which it gave rise in London, I cannot compare them with any Occurrence of the same kind that we have since witnessed in this country. The victory of Lord Howe, gained on the First of June, 1794, glorious and salutary as it was to Great Britain, yet seemed to be more a triumph over Jacobinism and Anarchy, than over the French nation or Navy. It was Robespierre and his Regicide Accomplices, not Louis the Sixteenth, whom we there vanquished. Lord St. Vincent, and Lord Duncan, unquestionably merited, each, the highest Eulogiums; but they destroyed, at Cape St. Vincent, and at Camperdown, the fleets of Spain and of Holland, not those of France. And no Englishman is insensible

to the distinction. The sublime victory of Trafalgar, itself, was clouded by the death of Nelson, which checked and tempered the general joy. If I were to mention any naval Action, the news of which seemed to diffuse sentiments nearly resembling those felt in May, 1782, I should incline to name that of Aboukir. But, in the battle of the Nile, where the destruction of the enemy was much more complete, though we destroyed and blew up the French Admiral's ship, we did not either capture her, or her Commander. There was combined in Rodney's victory, as Lord Loughborough at the time remarked in the House of Peers, all "the pomp, and "pride, and circumstance of war." It commenced with the rising sun, and only terminated with that setting luminary. The elements were hushed, only a light air prevailing, and the contending fleets were very nearly matched. Jamaica, the prize contended for by the two Nations was preserved by the Result; while all the promised Conquests of France and Spain, so near their apparent realization, disappeared, no more to be revived, even in idea. It constituted a sort of Compensation to Great Britain, for so many years of disgrace, for so great an expenditure of blood

and treasure, and even for the loss of America itself. The country, exhausted and humiliated, seemed to revive in its own estimation, and to resume once more its dignity among Nations. France, amidst all her past success, declined proportionably in the opinion of Europe, and has never since arrogated the same rank, as a Naval Power. It formed in fact the last triumph of England on the element of the water, over the House of Bourbon, before that great family itself, after reigning eight hundred years over the French, sunk under the torrent of Revolution.

Lord Cranston, one of the Captains of the *Formidable*, Sir George Rodney's ship, who brought over the news to this country; having, in consequence of that Commander's special injunctions, waited on Lord Sackville, though then no longer in office as American Secretary, in order to communicate to him the particulars of the Action; I had an opportunity of hearing Lord Cranston's account of the Engagement. He was sent, after the *Ville de Paris* struck, to take possession of her, as well as to receive De Grasse's sword; and he described the scene which the French Admiral's ship presented, on his ascending

her side, as altogether terrible. Between the fore-mast and main-mast, at every step he took, he said that he was over his buckles in blood, the carnage having been prodigious; but as numbers of cattle and sheep were stowed between decks, they had suffered not less than the crew and troops, from the effects of the cannon. On the quarter-deck, which remained still covered with dead and wounded, only De Grasse himself, together with two or three other persons, continued standing. The French Admiral had received a contusion in the loins, from a splinter, but was otherwise unhurt; a circumstance the more remarkable, he having been, during the whole action, for so many hours, exposed to a destructive fire, which swept away almost all his officers, and repeatedly cleared the quarter-deck. He was a tall, robust, and martial figure; presenting, in that moment, an object of respect, no less than of concern and sympathy. Lord Cranston said, that De Grasse could not recover from the astonishment into which he was plunged; the expressions of which he often reiterated, at seeing, in the course of so short a time, his vessel taken, his fleet defeated, and himself a prisoner. He was allowed to pass the night on board his own

ship, with every testimony of attention and regard, on the part of the British Commander.

An opinion which became very generally prevalent at the time, and obtained much belief, has made a deep impression on the public mind; namely, that this victory, signal as it must ever be esteemed, might nevertheless have been rendered far more complete, if it had been immediately improved by pursuing, without delay, the flying enemy. The friends of Sir Samuel Hood strongly maintained that position; and partial as I am to the memory of Lord Rodney, I confess that there always appeared to me to have been some foundation for the assertion. He was, himself, well aware of the charge, and I have heard him defend the line of conduct which he adopted subsequent to the victory, by very plausible, if not by solid and unanswerable reasons. He observed, that it was altogether unwarrantable, and might have been attended with the most ruinous consequences, to have detached twelve or more ships of the line, under Sir Samuel Hood, in pursuit of twenty-five at least of the French; which number remained together, as was be-

lieved, after the Action, and still constituted a most formidable force. If any check had been experienced by us, in consequence of such Eagerness or Precipitation, it was obvious that the fruits of the victory itself might even have been lost. Bougainville and Vaudreuil, who commanded under De Grasse, enjoyed a higher reputation for naval skill, than the Commander in chief, and might have repaired the defeat. How far these Facts or assertions may carry conviction to every mind, I cannot venture to determine. Lord Rodney, after his return to England, made no scruple of declaring in mixed company, where I was myself present; and he even wrote home at the time, in his private letters, more than one of which I have seen; that so violent was the spirit of party and faction in his own fleet, as almost to supersede and extinguish the affection to their Sovereign and their country, in the bosoms of many individuals serving under him. To such a height had it attained, that he asserted there were among them, officers of high rank, and of unquestionable courage, who nevertheless bore so inveterate an animosity to the Administration then existing; particularly to the first Lord of the Admiralty, the Earl of Sandwich; as almost to wish for a defeat, if it

would produce the dismission of Ministers. Similar assertions were made by Members of the House of Commons, in their Speeches. However incredible the fact itself may appear, and however lamentable it must be considered, if it was well founded; yet it is not easy to conceive the antipathies, political and personal, that had grown up in the English navy during the American war. They formed one of the characteristic features of the Times, and operated to the inconceivable injury of the British name and nation.

The commencement of Rodney's public letter, addressed to Mr. Stephens, the Secretary of the Admiralty, on this glorious occasion, excited a smile among the Critics and Grammarians; as he stated, that "It had pleased "God, *out* of his divine providence, to "grant to His Majesty's arms a most complete victory over the fleet of his ene-"my;" whereas, it seemed rather to have been an act performed *in* his divine providence. This error of a naval Commander, unaccustomed to composition, and whose profession was not the pen, but the sword; did not however attract the same comments, as an official Dispatch which we have since perused, sent from one of His Britannic Majesty's

Embassadors, who, addressing the Secretary of State, from *Constantinople*, appeared, by some Act of oblivious Inadvertence, to consider himself in *Asia*. Rodney's enemies, of whom he had a great number, asserted that after the victory was gained, he gave way to a sort of intoxication of mind, on finding himself master of the French Admiral's person and ship. They said that he seated himself in an arm chair, placed on the quarter deck of the "*Formidable*," as the Moon rose, in order to indulge his sight with the view of the "*Ville* "*de Paris*," which lay near him in a disabled state, and whose sides far overtopped those of his own vessel. And they added that he burst into expressions or exclamations of extravagant self praise and complacency; mingled with some reproaches on the want of ministerial gratitude, which he had experienced for his past services. Even admitting all these facts to be true in their utmost extent, they only prove the infirmity of human nature; and similar instances of weakness occur in the history of the most illustrious Commanders. Rodney, like the celebrated Marshal Villars, so distinguished under Louis the Fourteenth, talked perpetually of himself, and was the hero of his own story. But, pos-

terity will never forget the debt of gratitude due to his services, nor cease to consider him as one of the greatest men whom the English Navy produced in the course of the eighteenth Century. He unquestionably displayed equal coolness and science, on the day of the 12th of April; directed in person every Manœuvre, and preserved during twelve hours that the action lasted, the utmost presence of mind. Lord Cranston said that he never quitted the quarter deck for a minute, nor took any refreshment, except the support he derived from a Lemon, which he held constantly in his hand, and applied frequently to his lips.

If Rodney did not spare his animadversions on the spirit of political enmity and faction, which pervaded the British navy; his opponent, the Count de Grasse, made still louder accusations, and sent home stronger charges to the Court of Versailles, against the jealousies or rivalities which actuated the officers serving under him, on that memorable day. They doubtless, towards the close of the action, abandoned their Commander to his fate, and sought their safety in flight: but, the unforeseen Manœuvre by which Rodney had intersected the French line, at the commencement

of the engagement, threw the whole fleet into inextricable confusion; and it is very doubtful, whether by prolonging, or even by renewing the contest, Bougainville and Vaudreuil would have in any measure retrieved the misfortune. De Grasse, it is admitted on all hands, displayed the most unconquerable firmness. But perhaps he highly merited censure, at a moment when he saw before him in full prospect, so vast an object as the conquest and reduction of Jamaica, not to have suffered one or two ships of the French line to fall into our hands, rather than sacrifice, as he did, the whole plan of the Campaign, to their preservation. I know such to have been the general opinion entertained throughout France, where De Grasse laboured under popular odium to so great a degree, that while, after the ensuing peace, Suffrein always received, on entering the Theatres at Paris, the warmest testimonies of admiration, from every part of the house; De Grasse did not venture to present himself at the public Spectacles, from the apprehension of insult. Even the Court manifested similar sentiments; and though decorated with the Order of the "St. Esprit," he could not obtain permission to walk in the annual "Procession du Cordon

"Bleu" at Versailles, for several years subsequent to the Defeat in the West Indies.

The effect of so splendid a service rendered to his country, at a moment of such Dejection, and the popularity which it justly produced, in some measure disarmed the meditated attacks of Rodney's opponents at home. Burke, who had heaped the severest accusations upon him, for his conduct towards the inhabitants of St. Eustatius; and who was preparing to bring forward a Motion in the House of Commons, tending to criminate him for his acts while in possession of the island; immediately abandoned the intention. With one of those classic allusions which were familiar to his elegant mind, he observed, that "the great national benefit performed by the "English Admiral, obliterated his errors; "and like the laurel crown decreed by the "Roman Senate to Julius Cæsar, covered, "as well as concealed, his baldness." Even the rancour expressed by the new Ministers and their friends, towards Lord Sandwich, seemed to be blunted, if not mollified, by this undeniable proof of his meritorious exertions, in sending out a fleet to the West Indies, capable of vanquishing the French Naval Force.

It was justly said that *Alexander* had conquered with the troops of Philip. No further mention of impeachment or Prosecution was made, against the late first Lord of the Admiralty. The Cabinet, nevertheless, evincing in every part of their conduct, the reluctance with which they remunerated Rodney's merits; had already superseded him, by naming Admiral Pigot to the command of the fleet in the West Indies. But, as he had not quitted England, before intelligence arrived of the victory gained over De Grasse, it was evidently the wish of the country, loudly expressed, that Rodney should not be recalled, at a moment when he had raised the naval character of Great Britain, humbled France, and saved Jamaica. The new Administration, however, far from paying any regard to this expression of the general opinion; and apprehensive of some Motion being made on the subject, in one or the other of the two Houses of Parliament; instantly sent off Pigot, in a quick sailing Frigate, from Plymouth, with orders to replace the victorious Commander.

Severe comments were passed out of doors, upon the appointment, made under such circumstances; especially as Pigot had been al-

ready constituted a member of the new Board of Admiralty. Even the House of Commons, though since Lord North's resignation, the Majority seemed completely subservient to Fox, yet manifested some symptoms of disapprobation. There were not wanting persons in that Assembly, who compared it to the recall of the Duke of Marlborough from Flanders, and the substitution of the Duke of Ormond in his place, under Queen Anne. It was besides commonly asserted, that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, lay under pecuniary obligations to Pigot, of several thousand Pounds, for losses incurred at Play. And, though such a report might have originated in error or malevolence, yet it was difficult to disprove ; as Fox's notorious passion for gaming, had subjected him to similar engagements and embarrassments. Lord Keppel, when questioned in the House of Peers respecting the fact of Pigot's Appointment, felt so conscious of the indefensibility of the measure, that he did not dare to own it ; but contrived to evade the enquiry, by stating the want of evidence before them to prove the nomination. It was impossible more clearly to avow how much he was ashamed of such a transaction. The Opposition, during Lord North's Administration, in

their anxiety to decry the Earl of Sandwich, then First Lord of the Admiralty, asserted that Sir Edward Hughes was bound to give him a certain proportion of whatever prize-money he might acquire; as a return for being appointed to the naval Command in the East Indies. "Junius" treats the Duke of Grafton, when First Minister, in various letters, with indignation, for having given a Pension of five hundred Pounds a year, to Sir John Moore, whom he designates as a "Broken Gambler." Nor does he hesitate to add, that the Pension was "probably an "acquittance on the part of the Duke, of "Favours upon the Turf." But, how infinitely less culpable were Lord Sandwich, or the Duke of Grafton, had the allegations been ever so clearly proved, than was Fox, if we assume the truth of the fact imputed to him, in acquitting his debt to Pigot, by sending him out to the West Indies?

Rodney's victory, if it had taken place two Months earlier, would probably have operated to retard, or to prevent, Lord North's resignation. Nor did any man doubt that the Admiral himself would have received more distinguishing marks of Ministerial gra-

titude, as well as of Royal bounty, if Lord North had continued at the head of affairs, than were conferred on him by that Nobleman's successors. Lord Howe and Admiral Keppel had just been raised by their Party, to the dignity of *Viscounts*, without performing any Naval service. Many persons thought that an *Earldom* would not have constituted a reward too eminent for so important a victory. We have seen that high rank of the Peerage conferred since on Sir John Jervis, for the battle gained over the Spaniards, off Cape St. Vincent's; a victory, as was commonly reported, principally due to Sir Horatio Nelson. Lord Duncan, Lord Hood, and Lord Bridport, have all been created for their Exploits, English *Viscounts*. It was not without evident marks of unwillingness, that a *Barony*, and a Pension of two thousand Pounds per annum, were rather extorted from, than spontaneously given by the Ministry to Rodney; accompanied with his immediate supercession in the Command of the fleet. It must however be admitted on the other hand, that previous to the time of which I am now writing, the most distinguished naval services rarely conducted to the Peerage. Anson, it is true, was raised to it: but neither Saunders, nor Boscawen,

nor Pocock, attained to that honor. Even Hawke, far from being called up to the House of Peers, after he had destroyed the fleet of France in 1759, at the mouth of the Loire, was only made a *Baron* by Lord North, near seventeen years afterwards; and then, in company with several other individuals who were raised to the same dignity. It is for posterity to judge how far these circumstances may form some excuse for the apparent want of liberality towards a man who had rendered so critical, as well as so distinguished, a service to his country.

June.] While the victory obtained over De Grasse, produced so vast and beneficial an alteration in the affairs of Great Britain beyond the Atlantic, time seemed rapidly maturing another important change, or rather convulsion, in the domestic concerns of the kingdom. From the first formation of the new Cabinet, its jarring materials indicated, in the opinions of all discerning men, their speedy disunion and separation. Fox, conscious of the alienation in which the King held him, morally, as well as politically, possessed too much penetration not to foresee, and to predict, an approaching change of Administration. He was not without difficulty restrained from

precipitating it, by his open disapprobation of the intended, or imputed measures, of some of his Colleagues. The stern inflexibility of Lord Thurlow, likewise, who as Chancellor, thwarted and opposed, in the House of Peers, many of his measures, greatly irritated him. Nor did the preference shewn towards Lord Shelburne, on all occasions, by His Majesty, tend less to accelerate a rupture. In this situation of things, the decline of the Marquis of Rockingham's health, by incapacitating him to take as active a part in public affairs as he had previously done, removed the only remaining serious impediment: while it facilitated the accomplishment of those objects, which prudence and necessity alone had hitherto compelled the Sovereign to delay, till the arrival of a favourable opportunity.

No rational doubt can exist, that even if death had not carried off the Marquis of Rockingham, yet a change in the Administration would equally have taken place, nearly at the same time, and in the same manner, as it was afterwards effected. The necessity of making such arrangements as might, it was hoped, secure its duration, and enable Lord Shelburne to surmount the Opposition to be

expected in Parliament, had solely prevented him hitherto from accepting the place of first Lord of the Treasury. But, as the Session drew towards its close, that difficulty gradually ceased; while the period which must of course elapse between the Prorogation and the subsequent meeting, would afford, in all probability, if well improved, various means of strengthening the new Ministry. Lord Shelburne had already made advances to, and had sounded Mr. Pitt. His talents, eloquence, and popularity, sustained by his illustrious name, rendered him, notwithstanding his youth, capable of being successfully opposed to Fox, in the House of Commons. His ambition, which had impelled him to disdain and to reject a secondary place under the existing Administration, pointed out to Lord Shelburne the obvious bait, by which he might be induced to lend his powerful support; namely, a Cabinet Office. The decorum and regularity of his private life, altogether untinctured with the vices of Mr. Fox's character, gave him a vast superiority, in the estimation of all those who considered morality as indispensable to a man placed in public situation. In the contemplation of these circumstances, and with these intentions, it is well known that the King

had fully determined to displace such Members of the Cabinet as constituted the Rockingham Party; and to transfer the management of the Treasury to the Earl of Shelburne. The lapse of a few days, would perhaps have disclosed and produced this important event, when the decease of the first Minister spared His Majesty the necessity of dismissing him from his post.

1st of July.] Lord Rockingham, though hardly fifty-two years of age, already sunk under an infirm and debilitated constitution. A decay, to which was added a slow fever, or as it was denominated, Influenza, had for some time undermined his strength, without nevertheless appearing to menace his immediate dissolution. Early in June, after the King's birthday, having quitted Grosvenor-Square, he retired to Rochampton, where his recovery was confidently expected by his friends. Indeed, neither Fox nor Burke seem to have been prepared for his decease, though the former, with the manly, but, imprudent decision that marked his political character, instantly determined either to keep possession of the Treasury by Proxy, or to resign his office. Burke, though he personally detested Lord Shelburne,

yet would, I believe, have gladly retained his situation, under a new first Minister of the King's Election: but he could not separate himself from Fox. On that day, they held a long conversation, evidently of the most interesting and serious description, in the Court of Requests, where they continued walking backwards and forwards, long after the Speaker had taken the Chair. At length they both repaired to the House, where the Marquis's death being announced, warm Eulogiums were conferred on his Memory from various quarters. An amiable and a respectable individual, rather than a superior man, nature had not designed him to be the first Minister of a great country. *Junius* well characterizes his formation of mind, when he speaks of "the "mild, but determined integrity of Lord "Rockingham." Yet was there, as that Writer elsewhere observes, a degree of "Debility" in his virtue: but the moderation of his character tempered the ardour of Fox, and imposed limits on Burke's enthusiasm.

The state of his frame and health, which, even in his youth had never been robust; and both which were believed to have suffered severely in consequence of some imprudent gallantries, while pursuing his travels in the

south of Italy, at an early period of his life; incapacitated him for close or continued application, during the short period of his Administration. The Princess of Franca Villa was commonly supposed to have bestowed on him the same fatal present, which the "Belle Feroniere" conferred on Francis the First, King of France; and which, as we learn from *Burnet*, the Countess of Southesk was said to have entailed on James, Duke of York, afterwards James the Second. The Princess was still living when I visited Naples in the year 1779; and Sir William Hamilton assured me, that she always expressed the utmost concern for the unintentional misfortune which the Marquis's attachment had produced, as well as for its supposed results. Leaving no issue, the greater part of his vast landed property, as well as his Borough interests, descended to his nephew, Earl Fitzwilliam. In Lord Rockingham's person too, became extinct the title and Dignity of a British *Marquis;* he being the sole individual in the Kingdom who then possessed that high rank; to which Mr. Pitt has since elevated during his Administration, eleven Individuals; besides creating nine *Irish* Marquises, where there did not previously exist one Peer of that order. Such has been the prodigious encrease

of Peerages, during the present Reign! Unquestionably, Mr. Pitt, in thus augmenting the numbers of the House of Lords, was not animated by the same intention as the Romans attributed to the first of the Cæsars, when he encreased the Senate to nine hundred; or as Suetonius expresses it, "Senatum supplevit." But, it will be nevertheless for our descendants to decide, how far he has practically produced a similar effect on the Constitution of Great Britain, with the pernicious consequence which flowed from the augmentation of the Roman Senate by Cæsar.

If Fox would have submitted to retain his Office as Secretary of State, under Lord Shelburne, after the decease of the Marquis of Rockingham, it is not to be questioned that the King, whatever personal objections or dislike he might have felt towards Fox, would from prudential motives, have allowed him to continue in the Cabinet. Nor can it admit of a doubt, that Fox, by consenting to hold his own situation, would have induced Lord John Cavendish, over whom he always exercised an unbounded Ascendant, to follow his example. Burke, who manifested the greatest reluctance to quit the Pay Office, required rather to be impelled in making that sacrifice, than

appeared to feel any spontaneous disposition towards resigning so lucrative an appointment, of which he had scarcely tasted the first fruits. Fox's private circumstances were moreover so desperate, as to dictate some attention to them; and many of his friends stood in a similar predicament. But, his indignation at seeing the helm of the State transferred to Lord Shelburne, when added to his knowledge of he secret machinations which had preceded it, extinguished or superseded every other sentiment in his bosom. He peremptorily demanded, either that the Duke of Portland should be immediately recalled from Ireland, in order to be placed at the head of the Treasury, as the Representative of the deceased Marquis, and the acknowledged Chief of the Whig party; or he tendered to His Majesty, his own instant Resignation. His offer was accepted; and that of Lord John Cavendish, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, accompanied it, at the same time.

When we calmly examine the motives by which Fox was actuated in thus throwing up his Office, we must admit that he consulted more his passions than his reason; since he lay under no necessity of sacrificing either his country, or his principles, to the preserva-

tion of his employment. Lord Shelburne's insincerity or duplicity could not operate to produce the public ruin, except by the measures that, in his capacity of first Minister, he might bring forward: and whatever repugnance he might individually feel to grant the American colonies unconditional independence, yet the majority of the Cabinet, after Fox's and Lord John Cavendish's secession, compelled him ultimately to adopt that principle. By retaining his place under the new first Lord of the Treasury, Fox would therefore have secured his adherence to the late Marquis's plans; or on his departure from them, Fox would have carried Parliament and the Country with him, by instantly refusing longer to co-operate with a Minister, who evaded or declined recognizing the Sovereignty of the thirteen States. Nor could Lord Keppel and the Duke of Richmond have then separated themselves from him. If, instead of the violent step that he took, he had acted with temper, he would have advanced the public interests, while he consolidated his own tenure of Office. The King and Lord Shelburne, however much they might have desired to dismiss him, could not have ventured on it, without a pretence. Pitt might probably have become Secretary of State for the Home

Department; and a very strong Government must have arisen, from which Lord North, as well as his adherents, would have been altogether excluded. But, in order to have produced this benefit to the State, it was necessary for Fox to begin by obtaining a triumph over himself. He preferred more dictatorial measures, which, in the course of a few months, compelled him either to behold his enemy confirmed in power, after making Peace, while himself and his adherents remained on the Opposition Bench; or regardless of consequences, to form a junction with Lord North, and storm the Cabinet a second time. Such was the injurious result of his intemperate precipitation.

Fox, in taking this decisive step, probably flatsered himself that it would have operated to a wider extent, than actually happened. Though he could not rationally hope that either Lord Camden or the Duke of Grafton would resign; and though he ought not to have supposed that General Conway would do so; since not one of these Ministers depended on the late Marquis of Rockingham; yet he certainly calculated that his uncle the Duke of Richmond, as well as Lord Keppel,

would imitate his example. In this expectation, he was, however, disappointed. They both expressed, indeed, in the Upper House of Parliament, their great regret at his secession; but they declined following him out of the Cabinet, and stated the motives for their determination. It remained during some time doubtful, whether Mr. Pitt would have been appointed one of the Secretaries of State, or placed in the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The latter employment was finally conferred on him. Mr. Thomas Townsend succeeded Lord Shelburne in the Home Department; leaving the post of Secretary at War to Sir George Yonge. The Foreign Office, vacated by Fox, was last filled up, and given to Lord Grantham. However inferior in energy and brilliancy of intellect to his predecessor, he possessed solid, though not eminent parts, added to a knowledge of foreign affairs and of Europe, having resided several years with great reputation as Embassador at the Court of Madrid.

Two of the Lords of the Treasury followed Mr. Fox out of Office. One, Lord Althorpe, has since filled with Honor to

himself, and advantage to the public, as Earl Spencer, a high Cabinet Office under Mr. Pitt's Administration. Frederick Montagu, the other, a man equally respectable for probity and for talents, afterwards raised to the Dignity of a Privy Councillor; was a devoted adherent of the Cavendish and Rockingham interest. Mr. Richard Jackson, and Mr. Edward James Eliot, succeeded to these Vacancies. The former gentleman, one of Lord Shelburne's intimate friends, bred to the Bar, had obtained, from the universality of his information on all topics, as I have already had occasion to remark, the appellation of "Omniscient Jackson." Mr. Eliot afterwards married Lady Harriet Pitt, sister of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and his father, early in 1784, was created a Peer, while the new first Minister had still to contend against a Majority in the House of Commons. The remaining Member of the Treasury Board, Mr. James Grenville, whom we have likewise seen elevated by Mr. Pitt to the British Peerage, at a later period of his Administration; did not think proper to imitate the Example of his Colleagues. Mr. Thomas Orde, who became one of the two Secretaries of the new Treasury; like Mr. Grenville, terminated

his career as a Commoner, on the very same day, fifteen years afterwards, by a removal to the upper House of Parliament. The Peerage formed, indeed, the Euthanasia, the natural Translation of all Mr. Pitt's favourite adherents, friends, and relations, either by consanguinity, or by alliance. It must be admitted that Mr. Orde had a double pretension to it, from his services, and his matrimonial connection. While a Member of the House of Commons, he had distinguished himself by drawing up more than one of the most able Reports of the "Secret Committee," appointed to enquire into the Causes of the War in the Carnatic, of which Committee he was a leading Member. But, his best claim consisted in having married the natural daughter of Charles, Duke of Bolton; in virtue of which union, and from the failure of male issue in the person of the succeeding Duke, Mr. Orde became eventually possessed of some of the finest estates of that illustrious family. The Title itself, diminished to a Barony, was revived in him, together with the name of Powlett. Lord North remained an inactive, though not an unconcerned, or a silent spectator, of this new convulsion in the Councils of the Crown, which had so soon expelled from the Cabinet

one of the two parties, by whom he was himself driven from power. Of all those individuals who had supported his Administration, or occupied any eminent situation under it, only two quitted him, in order to be received into Lord Shelburne's confidence and ministry. The Lord Advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, after eight years adherence, now abandoned altogether his antient political leader; and imitating the precedent exhibited by Mr. Pitt, took office, by accepting the Treasurership of the Navy. From this period, they continued for the remainder of their lives, inseparable in good, as well as in adverse fortune. Lord Mulgrave followed Dundas's example. The Duke of Portland, who, as being devoted to the Rockingham interest, adopted Mr. Fox's line of conduct, was succeeded in the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, by Earl Temple; a Nobleman of very considerable talents, though inferior in energy of mind and character, to either of his brothers.

The interruption which so important a change in the Government occasioned in the ordinary business of the House of Commons, prevented any discussion from arising in that assembly during some days, relative to the

causes and motives of Mr. Fox's resignation. But an occasion soon presented itself, which enabled him to state all his grievances, to unfold some portion of the mystery that pervaded his conduct, and to bring forward the heaviest charges against the new first Lord of the Treasury. A pension of three thousand, two hundred pounds a year having been granted to Colonel Barré, by the Administration of which Lord Rockingham constituted the head; and another very considerable pension given at the same time to Lord Ashburton, the two principal friends of Lord Shelburne in both Houses of Parliament; these grants, the consideration of which was unexpectedly brought forward, became severely arraigned. It seemed, indeed, impossible not to feel a degree of astonishment at contemplating such profuse donations of the public money, made by men who condemned Lord North's want of economy; who were with difficulty induced to give a pension of two thousand pounds a year to Lord Rodney, for having defeated the French fleet, and saved Jamaica; who, themselves had recently reduced the Household of the Sovereign; and who loudly asserted their personal disinterestedness. Fox admitted that the deceased Marquis, his friend, had con-

curred in recommending the pensions conferred on Lord Ashburton, and on Barré: but he entreated the House to observe, that while Lord Shelburne's adherents received such distinguishing marks of the bounty of the Crown, the followers of Lord Rockingham, many of whom could plead equal merit, and equal want, remained without provision of any kind.

After thus in some measure removing the odium attached to the act, from that party of which he formed a member; he accused the new first Minister of the most unworthy duplicity, of the complete abandonment of every political principle on which he professed to have come into Office, and of an intention to protect, as well as to shelter delinquents. Having next enumerated the great points on which Lord Shelburne and he had differed in the Cabinet, among which he particularly specified the question of conceding Independence to America; he concluded by heaping upon that Nobleman, imputations more severe and humiliating, if possible, than the charges with which, during many years, he had profusely loaded Lord North. In the warmth of his indignation, he even ventured to predict

the probability, that with a view to maintain possession of the power so acquired, Lord Shelburne would not scruple to apply for support, to the very men whom the House and the nation had recently driven from their official situations. He unfortunately did not then foresee, that within seven Months from the time when he was speaking, he should, himself, in order to re-enter the Cabinet, form a junction with the expelled Minister, whom he had so long held up to national resentment, and towards whom he still professed the utmost alienation. Such were the inconsistencies and contradictions, into which the Ambition of Fox betrayed him; and from which, all the splendor of his talents could not extricate his public character, without eventually incurring imputations, nearly as heavy as those which he lavished on his political opponents.

The members of the new Administration diverged on this occasion, in widely different lines. General Conway, with that "undetermined discretion" imputed to him by "Junius," contented himself by endeavouring to justify his own line of conduct, and that of the Cabinet Ministers who had declined to imitate the example of Fox; which he did rather with caution and delicacy, than

with any asperity or acrimony. But, Pitt, now become Chancellor of the Exchequer, rising in his place, and observing none of these personal managements, boldly accused the late Secretary of State with sacrificing his country to his ambition, his interest, or his enmities; charged him with being at variance, not with principles or measures, but with men; and claimed the support of the House no longer than he should maintain that System, on which the late Administration had been driven from power. For the first time, the country beheld two individuals, who might hitherto be said to have fought under the same standard, openly opposed to each other; and who were destined never more, during their lives, under any change of circumstances, to act in political union. In fact, from this period, though Lord North remained ostensibly at the head of one great party, and though Lord Shelburne, who occupied the place of first Minister, was nominally the chief of another; yet they ceased to be considered as the principal personages in the state. Pitt and Fox attracting far more attention, were regarded by the nation at large, no less than by Parliament, as rival Candidates for the future government of the country.

10th July.] Lord Shelburne, when attack-

ed in the House of Peers, respecting the pensions granted to his two friends, particularly on that given to Barré, which excited the greatest comment; endeavoured to shift the origin, and consequently the odium of having conferred the latter, on Lord Rockingham. In this attempt he proved, however, eminently unfortunate, as his assertions on the subject, produced in both Houses of Parliament, the most unqualified contradictions from the connexions or adherents of the deceased Marquis. However painful or humiliating such affronts must have been, which impeached his personal veracity, equally as a man, and as a Minister, he nevertheless submitted to them, without making any further effort to justify himself in the opinion of the public; and the circumstances that attended the Prorogation of Parliament, seemed to indicate his impatience under the deliberations of that Assembly, as well as his apprehensions of the impression made on many individuals, by Fox's accusations. Lord Shelburne's courage, which was unquestionable, had been proved in the duel that he fought with Colonel Fullerton. It appeared therefore impossible to suppose that he would have tamely endured such imputations on his private character, if he had

possessed the means of effectually repelling them. Even on the subject of granting American Independence, there was so much ambiguity, if not tergiversation and contradiction in all his Parliamentary speeches, as greatly tended to persuade mankind, that Fox's allegations respecting Lord Shelburne's disinclination to concede the point, must have had a foundation in truth. The very principle on which he avowed, when addressing the House of Peers, that he retained his place in the councils of the Crown, seemed incompatible with strict regard to political rectitude. For he declared in the plainest language, that he was not only adverse in his own judgment, to acknowledging the independence of the thirteen Colonies; but that whenever such a recognition should be extorted from this country, "The sun of British glory was for "ever set." Yet in the same moment he admitted, that as the majority of the Rockingham Cabinet were of an opposite opinion, he acquiesced in the measure; which measure, though destructive, as he conceived, to Great Britain, he was now ready, in his new capacity, if parliament approved it, to carry into execution.

No imputation, affixed on Lord North,

had operated with more force in his disfavor, on the minds of the public, than the assertion of his enemies, that he prosecuted the American war in opposition to his own conviction, from a love of place, or from unworthy subservience to the Royal will. But, to a similar charge, the new First Minister appeared voluntarily to subject himself. Lee, who had filled the office of Solicitor General under the late Administration, but who had quitted his employment at the same time with the other adherents of the Marquis of Rockingham; a man of strong parts, though of coarse manners; and who never hesitated to express in the coarsest language, whatever he thought; carried his indecorous abuse of the new First Lord of the Treasury, to even greater lengths than any other individual of the party dismissed from power. He described Lord Shelburne as deficient in probity, integrity, and every estimable quality that ought to be found in a First Minister of Great Britain; though he admitted that Nobleman's external talents, comprehensive information, and specious accomplishments. The House of Commons formed the scene of this extraordinary invective, levelled not so much against the public conduct or mea-

sures, as against the moral character of a person placed in the highest office of State. As if to complete their attacks, the daily Newspapers accused him of having undermined Lord Rockingham in the Royal esteem, by the most unworthy arts, in order to get possession of his Office: while the political Caricatures, exhibited in the shops of the Metropolis, represented Lord Shelburne habited as Guy Faux; so notorious for the part that was assigned him in the "Gunpowder Plot," under James the First; holding a dark lanthorn in his hand, advancing under cover of the night, to blow up the Treasury.

11th July.] Amidst these inauspicious and painful symptoms of public opinion, commenced that Nobleman's Administration. Even to the last moment that the House of Commons remained sitting, Burke, among the querulous lamentations that he uttered, on being so suddenly ejected from his Office of Paymaster of the Forces; a misfortune which seemed deeply to affect him; mingled the loudest exclamations against the falsity and defect of Principle in the First Minister. His Philippic was cut short in the middle, by the arrival of Sir Francis Molineux, as Usher

of the Black Rod, sent to summon the attendance of the Members, at the Bar of the House of Lords; where the King, already seated on the throne, was ready to prorogue the Parliament. A singular fact, arising out of the late Reforms, accompanied this ceremony. Among the Retrenchments of the Royal household and dignity, which Burke's Bill had made, was included, as has been already observed, the suppression of the Jewel Office; the business of which was principally conducted by Mr. William Egerton, a relation of the Duke of Bridgewater, and a Member of the House of Commons. The Bill having so recently passed into a law, no new official Regulation had been adopted, for the removal or transportation of the Paraphernalia of the Crown. On the occasion of His Majesty going to Westminster, to prorogue the two Houses, it became indispensable to convey thither the Crown and Sceptre, together with various other articles of State. The Master of the Jewel Office being suppressed, in whose Department these dispositions previously lay; application was made to the Lord Steward, and to the Lord Chamberlain, praying that Orders might be issued to the Keeper of the Jewels in the Tower, for bringing them

to Westminster on the day of the Prorogation. But, these great Officers of State, not conceiving themselves to possess a power of interference, directions were at length dispatched for the purpose, from the Home Secretary of State's Office. After some consultation held, relative to the safest mode of conveying these Royal ornaments; none of the King's carriages being sent to receive them, application was next made to the Magistrates at Bow-Street, who detached four or five stout Agents of the Police, for their protection. Two Hackney Coaches being provided, in which the various articles were placed; with a view to render the transportation of them more private, the Procession set out circuitously from the Tower, by the New Road; entering London again at Portland-Street, and so proceeded down to Westminster. The blinds were kept up the whole way; and after the Prorogation, they returned by the same Road, without experiencing any accident. But, it is unquestionable, that eight or ten desperate fellows, had they been apprized of the circumstance, might have easily overpowered the persons employed, and have carried off the Jewels. The memorable enterprize of Colonel Blood, under Charles the Second,

who got possession of the Crown and Sceptre, though he ultimately failed was in fact, a far more hazardous undertaking, as he actually entered the Tower; whereas in the present instance, the Attempt might have been made in the Street, or in the New Road. Any accident of the kind would necessarily have thrown some degree of ridicule, as well as of blame, on a system of economy, productive of such consequences in its outset.

Among the interesting features of the Session of Parliament before us, which, on account of a degree of mystery or ambiguity accompanying them, greatly exercised public curiosity; may be reckoned the Proceedings commenced against Sir Thomas Rumbold. I say commenced, because they never were prosecuted to any consummation. This Gentleman returned, as has been already mentioned, from Madras, early in 1781, under Imputations the most injurious to his fame. He was accused of having, while Governor of that important Settlement, not only amassed by every unbecoming means, an immense fortune; but, of first provoking a war with Hyder Ally, by acts of imprudent aggression, and then of abandoning the country

entrusted to his care, with pusillanimous or interested precipitation. These charges, which were solemnly brought against him by Mr. Dundas, Lord Advocate of Scotland, as Chairman of the Secret Committee appointed by the House of Commons, to enquire into the causes of the War in the Carnatic, produced a deep impression on the public mind. We have already seen the steps which were immediately adopted by the Legislature, to tie up and impound Sir Thomas's person, as well as his fortune. But, in addition to these precautions, a Bill for inflicting on him pains and penalties, as a man who had been guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, was introduced by Mr. Dundas himself.

Such a measure, which excited general approbation, appeared to be worthy the national justice, exerted in punishing a great public culprit. The line of policy pursued by Hastings, when Governor-General of Bengal, might possibly have led to many misfortunes, and might, perhaps, merit condemnation. But his motives were admitted, even by his enemies, to have been splendid and elevated, however pernicious, as they asserted, in their operation or consequences.

The mal-administration of Rumbold, on the contrary, seemed only directed to sordid and selfish purposes. Every party, it was therefore hoped, would concur in carrying through such a Bill; and though Mr. Dundas, after the termination of Lord North's Ministry, no longer acted in an official situation, yet, in his capacity of Chairman of "the Secret Committee," he spoke from a great eminence, and might expect universal support. Least of all, it was supposed, could the Rockingham party, who had just come into power, who professed to call to a severe account, all such as had plundered or injured the Country, and who loudly demanded an Enquiry into East-India delinquencies, attempt to throw obstacles in the path of justice. Under these circumstances, all men expected, and most men hoped, that the Bill in question would have speedily found its way through the House of Commons, and have finally passed into a law. The fact, nevertheless, turned out completely otherwise. Meanwhile the Session advanced: a full attendance, as Mr. Dundas asserted and complained, could not be procured: and whether from the operation of that Cause, or from any other Reason more concealed, no progress was made

in the business. Sir Thomas Rumbold's person and property remained, it is true, sequestered or restrained; but, beyond that temporary interposition, no permanent punishment was inflicted on him.

Men who had anticipated much more vigorous and speedy, as well as decisive proceedings, and who beheld the supposed criminal thus elude or escape, as it were, the grasp of national pursuit; reasoned and commented on the Fact. Malignity or Credulity invented reasons for whatever appeared inexplicable throughout the Transaction. Secret springs were asserted to have been touched, which had arrested or paralyzed the exertions of the Prosecutor. Time, place, and circumstances, were even particularized; all which, though perhaps untrue or imaginary, seemed nevertheless, not only in themselves, possible, but, so well fabricated, and so minutely detailed, as to appear highly probable. I shall, however, relate only such Facts as are unquestionably authentic.

Rumbold, though a man of low extraction, and of a mean education, did not by any means want activity, judgment, or talents.

I knew him well. In his person he was well made and handsome; but his features, though regular and manly, contained nothing in them prepossessing. His successful exertions, while Governor of Madras, in reducing Pondicherry, had elevated him to the dignity of a Baronet. On his arrival in England, aware of the storm that impended over him, he immediately contrived to get into Parliament; by which means he came into daily collision and communication with those, who might either injure, or could defend him. That he was not idle, is certain; and he attempted in his place, as a Member of the House, to justify himself from the charges exhibited against him, with some ability. In addition, however, to these efforts, he soon found means to conciliate a Friend, who was supposed to have laboured efficaciously towards his extrication.

That Friend, who was Mr. Rigby, the late Paymaster of the Forces, having enjoyed during a great number of years, one of the most profitable places under the Crown, without any Colleague, had acquired a large fortune. But, his luxurious and expensive manner of living in town; his magnificent Seat at

Mistley Hall in Essex, where he maintained a splendid establishment of every kind; when added to his purchases of landed property, had exhausted even means so vast, and left him, as it were, necessitous in the midst of wealth. In this situation of his affairs, the sudden termination of Lord North's Administration, not only deprived him of his Employment; but, in consequence of the system of reform adopted by the new Ministers, and in particular from the Regulations introduced by Burke, his successor in the Pay-office, which compelled him to pay into the Exchequer, the immense Balances of public money remaining in his hands; Rigby became involved in great pecuniary embarrassments. These Balances having been vested by him in Mortgages, or in other securities; and the public Funds suffering then under great depression, it could not be in fact an easy matter, to find the means of answering promptly the Demands made upon him by Government, for repayment.

Rumbold had brought with him from the East, as Verres did from Sicily, very ample Resources, which he well knew how to use, in time of need, for his own protection; and

Rigby's situation, which was generally understood, might render a loan of money peculiarly convenient. That gentleman having no children, his sister's son was destined to inherit his name and property. Rumbold had a daughter, whose age and accomplishments qualified her to be united to him in marriage. The alliance being agreed on, it was supposed that by the Secret Articles, the Governor advanced to his Friend, such a sum as greatly facilitated those payments of the public money, which he was necessitated to furnish without delay. After entering into so close a connection, cemented by such binding ties, it might be esteemed natural, and even venial, that Rigby should lend his reciprocal aid to Sir Thomas Rumbold. Though no longer Paymaster of the Forces, Rigby still possessed great capacities of being useful; and he was not supposed to lie under the dominion of any fastidious scruples. Above all, his intimate friendship with Mr. Dundas, who took the lead in the Parliamentary Prosecution instituted against Rumbold, might enable Rigby to find means and opportunities of diminishing those Prejudices, or softening those Impressions, that operated most injuriously against the accused person. No proof

has been, indeed, ever produced, that improper means were used to effect this object; but the public being in possession of certain facts, and observing that the proceedings so vigorously begun in Parliament against Rumbold, seemed unaccountably to languish and expire, instead of being propelled; necessarily inferred, that there must exist some latent cause, which had blunted the edge of the weapon. Rumbold, it is certain, finally extricated himself; though whether the ostensible reasons assigned for the fact, formed the only circumstances that conduced to his escape; or whether more efficacious and cogent arguments of any kind were used, must always remain matter of conjecture and assertion, like many other obscure points of biographical history.

The Session being now terminated, Lord Shelburne might be regarded as secure in the possession of his newly acquired power, at least for several Months. During that interval, means, it was naturally imagined, could easily be discovered, of cementing and confirming the Ministry. Negotiations for peace were already begun with America, which, if successful, it was probable, must eventually lead to a treaty

with our European enemies. The talents of the first Lord of the Treasury, were considered as eminently adapted to diplomatic discussions; in the conduct of which, his knowledge of the foreign interests of Great Britain, and his acquaintance with the Continental Courts, enabled him, it was said, to act at once with vigor and perspicuity. If he had lost the abilities of Fox and Burke in the House of Commons, he had on the other hand secured and attached to him two men no less able, Pitt, and Dundas. He moreover possessed the confidence of the Sovereign, who, as all men supposed, would, from necessity, if not from inclination, support a Minister preferred by himself to his present Office. Lord North might even, it was hoped, feel a far stronger disposition to join the actual Administration, whenever Parliament should meet again, than to unite with the Rockingham Party, his inveterate enemies. Under this aspect of public affairs, though Lord Shelburne neither stood high in the national opinion, as a man of severe integrity and probity, like his deceased predecessor, the Marquis of Rockingham; nor could command that Parliamentary strength, which Lord North still in some measure in-

fluenced or led; yet many persons considered his tenure of Office as by no means precarious, and augured well of its duration.

Burke's invectives against the first Minister, which continued to the last instant that the forms of Parliament permitted, were nevertheless suspended while the Prorogation put an end to the business of the House of Commons. However violent he might be in his place, Burke never carried his complaints to the people. But, Fox, who acted no less as a Demagogue, than as the Representative of Westminster; and who always seemed to take the Gracchi for his model; anxious to appeal from his late dismission by the King, to the popular Suffrage, convoked his Constituents, in order to lay before them the reasons for his resignation. They met, almost immediately after the Session closed, in Westminster Hall, where he reiterated all the heads of accusation against Lord Shelburne, which he had already detailed a few days before, in the House of Commons: but, the general impression, even among that audience, which heard him with partiality, seemed nevertheless to be, that personal ambition and rivality, more than

real principle or patriotism, had regulated his conduct. The specious pretence under which the Meeting was assembled, namely, that of petitioning the Crown for a more equal Representation of the People, produced, however, an unanimous assent. He then dismissed them till the ensuing Winter.

August.] Sir Samuel Hood, whom the victorious Admiral in the West-Indies, detached a few days after the defeat of De Grasse, with several vessels, in pursuit of the flying enemy; having come up with some of them, captured two more French line of battle ships, as well as two Frigates, off the east end of the Island of St. Domingo. Though these eminent naval advantages secured Jamaica from invasion or attack, yet, far from regaining any of our insular possessions in that quarter of the Globe, on the contrary, such was our state of exhausture, that Spain fitted out an expedition against the Bahama Islands, which she easily reduced to her obedience. But, the attention of the Capital and the nation became more powerfully, as well as painfully attracted, by the Catastrophe of the "Royal George," which took place about the same time, than by the loss of any Trans-Atlantic Settlements.

This ship, the pride and ornament of the British Navy, to the disgrace of a nation considered as superior to every other people in nautical skill, disappeared in an instant on the 29th of August, as is well known, in the midst of Portsmouth Harbour; carrying with her to the bottom, an English Admiral; and as it was computed, near a thousand persons of both sexes. It is impossible, even at this distance of time, to reflect on such an event, without amazement as well as horror. The gloom and consternation, diffused by the intelligence over the Metropolis, are hardly to be conceived; and the incredibility of the fact, encreased the sense of the disaster. No parallel circumstance is to be found in our naval Annals: probably, not in those of any other European nation. In a superstitious Age, it would, no doubt, have been considered as ominous of the greatest national, or royal misfortunes. That tempests, fire, or rocks and quicksands, should swallow up and destroy the proudest works of human art, is natural; often, unavoidable. When Sir Cloudesley Shovel, under the reign of Queen Anne, perished together with his ship and all his Crew, wrecked on the Scilly Islands; or when the "Victory," under George the Second, foundered in the Race

of Alderney, with Admiral Balchen, and eleven hundred persons on board: — such calamities were in the order of things, however much to be deplored. But, in the present instance, only an utter disregard to common prudential precautions, could have produced an event so unprecedented. Her very name, and her superiority in size, as well as in strength, to every other ship in the service, she carrying a hundred guns; added to the bitterness of the reflexions which her loss occasioned throughout the kingdom. Those who recollect that the "Queen Charlotte," a man of war of the first rate, carrying one hundred and ten guns, with an Admiral's flag, was consumed by somewhat similar negligence, together with near seven hundred of her Crew, on the 17th of March, 1800, near the Port of Leghorn; may find ample reason for speculation on the singularity of two such disastrous events having taken place under the same reign.

September.] The melancholy impression made by the Catastrophe just related, became, if possible, still more strongly excited immediately afterwards, by other naval misfortunes equally afflicting in their nature. If the fact of the "Royal George" going down at her

anchors, when no danger was even apprehended, stands without precedent in our maritime records; the fatality which seemed to pursue the ships of the line that had been captured by Rodney on the 12th of April, as well as most of our own men of war, accompanying the French prizes, on their return from the West Indies, can scarcely be equalled in modern History. The chain of shipwrecks and adverse events, that attended Commodore Anson's expedition round Cape Horn, in 1744, which so greatly reduced the numbers of his Squadron; even the disasters, so pathetically related in the same work, that ruined the fleet of the Spanish Admiral Pizarro, nearly in the same Latitudes, and at the same time; — those calamities, however extraordinary and tragical, they appear, yet sink on a comparison with the destruction experienced by our devoted ships, in 1782, when crossing the Atlantic. Captain Inglefield has commemorated the fate of the "Centaur," as well as his own astonishing escape, when she foundered with her officers and Crew. That affecting narrative may serve as too faithful a picture of the misfortunes experienced by the other vessels. The "Ramil-"lies," a name proverbially unfortunate in the

English Navy, was set on fire, when it became impossible any longer either to navigate, or to preserve her. One of the French ships of the line, the "Hector," seemed to be reserved for more severe trials of every kind; in the course of which, all that human fortitude, skill, and courage, when combined, could effect, was performed by our officers and seamen. They were almost miraculously saved, though the "Hector" herself perished.

Over the closing scene of the "Ville de "Paris," as well as over the fate of the Glori-"eux," an impenetrable curtain is drawn. It is certain that the second, a French seventy-four gun ship, commanded by the Honourable Captain Cadogan, disappeared during the middle Watch, on the night of the 17th or 18th of September, after firing many signals of distress. Her lights had been visible till that time; but, when day appeared, no vestiges of her were discovered, and she doubtless foundered during the storm. Nor was De Grasse's ship, originally purchased with so vast an effusion of blood, and herself the pride of the French navy, ever destined to reach an English port. The hasty repairs given her at Jamaica, could only be slight or partial; and

it was confidently asserted, that during the gale of wind which proved so fatal, her guns breaking loose, tore open her side, and accelerated, if they did not cause, her final destruction. Tidings of her were long expected, and the nation continued to nourish hopes for many months, of her re-appearance. About this time, while her fate still remained problematical, a man was brought to the Admiralty, and there examined, who had been taken up at sea, nearly senseless and extenuated; tied to, or floating on a hen coop. He asserted, and his testimony appeared to be entitled to credit; that he served on board the "Ville de Paris," as a common sailor, at the moment when she foundered. But few, or no particulars, relative to the event itself, could be extracted from this survivor, who, as I was assured by a Flag Officer that questioned him, possessed neither faculties nor memory to recount almost any thing, except the fact of her loss. Admiral Graves, who commanded the fleet, was censured by the popular voice, for having stood some Degrees more to the Northward, in returning home across the Atlantic, at that season, than he needed to have done; or than he was warranted in doing, by Lord Rodney's orders. But, this accusation may

possibly have been more severe than just; though I think I have heard Lord Rodney himself state the circumstance, and express his conviction of the injurious consequences that resulted from navigating in too high a Latitude, during a time of Equinoxial gales.

Happily, the gloom which these melancholy events diffused, was speedily relieved and dissipated, by scenes of the most exhilarating nature. Minorca, it is true, had surrendered early in the Summer; but Gibraltar, which still resisted, attracted, no less from the prodigious means employed for its reduction by the enemy, than from the energy and activity exerted in its defence, the attention of all Europe. The two most memorable sieges which are recorded in modern history; namely, that of Antwerp, undertaken by Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, in the sixteenth Century; and that of Ostend, begun by Spinola, only a few years later; however illustrious they have been rendered from the long protracted resistance made by the besieged, were both finally crowned with success. Gibraltar, on the contrary, repelled the assailants in the most brilliant manner. All the means that human art, expence, and force,

could collect or combine, by land, as well as by sea, were accumulated under its walls; and the two Branches of the House of Bourbon, unconscious of the lamentable destiny preparing for themselves in the womb of time, seemed to vie in their efforts to accelerate its fall. Charles the Third, who then reigned in Spain, already anticipated the completion of an event, which, as he justly conceived, would render his name and reign immortal in the Spanish Annals. Under the same fallacious expectation, Louis the Sixteenth dispatched his youngest brother, Count d'Artois, to assist at its surrender; while the Barbary Powers, though by no means indifferent, or uninterested spectators of this great contest, and though they are said to have put up prayers in all their Mosques for our success, yet quietly expected the result.

If Lord Rodney acquired so much personal glory by his victory over De Grasse, General Elliot did not establish a less brilliant reputation, by his repulse and defeat of the Spanish floating batteries, on the 13th of September, of the same year. The American war, which at Saratoga, and at York Town, displayed spectacles so humiliating to the British arms,

terminated with the most splendid triumphs over our European enemies; and this portion of the reign of George the Third, (like the second Punic war in Antiquity,) exhibits, between 1777 and 1782, the greatest reverses of adverse, and of prosperous fortune. While we lost so vast an empire beyond the Atlantic, we humbled with one hand, the French naval force in the West Indies; annihilating with the other, the combined efforts of France and Spain, which were concentered for the subjugation of a distant Garrison, apparently left to its own capacities of defence, and cut off from the obvious means of relief. But, even after the destruction of the Spanish vessels and batteries, it seemed still impossible to throw into Gibraltar timely supplies of ammunition, competent to recruit the expenditure that had taken place during the siege. Provisions, fuel, cloathing, as well as many other essential or indispensable articles, could only be sent out from England. Near fifty French and Spanish ships of the line, which occupied the Bay of Gibraltar, appeared to set at defiance all approach. Notwithstanding these apparently insuperable obstacles, the attempt succeeded in opposition to every impediment.

October.] So low had sunk the numerical naval force of Great Britain at this period, as compared with the strength of the enemy, that the utmost exertions of the Admiralty, under the new Administration, could only equip and send to sea, thirty-four sail of the line; which fleet did not quit Spithead, till nearly the day on which General Elliot had already repulsed and burnt the floating batteries, under the walls of the besieged fortress. Yet never was the real superiority of our navy in skill and science, more evidently demonstrated, than in successfully throwing succours into a place invested by sea and land, without committing any thing to hazard, or affording to adversaries so numerous, the slightest advantage. Lord Howe, who conducted and commanded the whole enterprize, manifested such a combination of Tactics and ability in his Manœuvres, as place his name deservedly high in the Annals of his country. If the reputation that he attained on this occasion, seems less brilliant than the fame acquired by Rodney in vanquishing De Grasse, it was not less permanent or solid. Without engaging, he defied the combined fleets; offered battle, but did not seek it; effected every object of the expedition, by relieving

Gibraltar, and then retreated; followed indeed by the enemy, but not attacked. They made, it is true, a shew of fighting, but never ventured to come to close action. And with such contempt did Lord Howe treat the Cannonade commenced by the van, composed of French ships under La Motte Piquet, that having ordered all his men on board the "Victory," to lye down flat on the deck, in order that their lives might not be needlessly exposed, he disdained to return a single shot against such cautious or timid opponents.

Pigot, who had succeeded to Rodney in the West Indies, in defiance of public opinion, by no means emulated his example of Activity and Enterprize. Though placed at the head of six and forty sail of the line, he neither effected nor attempted any object, during more than six months that he held the command. Such inactivity seemed to reproach the Ministry who had sent him thither, and excited severe animadversions on Fox. In the East Indies, and there only, where Sir Edward Hughes was opposed to Suffrein, France still maintained the contest on the water. That active and intrepid officer last named, the

most able of any employed by Louis the Sixteenth during the whole progress of the war, made repeated though ineffectual efforts to compel the English squadron to abandon the coast of Coromandel.

November.] While Lord Howe thus placed in security, the most brilliant foreign possession of the Crown in Europe; negociations of a pacific nature were carrying on at Paris, both with America, and with the other Coalesced Powers. The articles concluded with the revolted Colonies, which were first provisionally signed, did not indeed demand either any considerable length of time, or superior diplomatic talents, in order to conduct them to a prosperous termination; where almost every possible concession was made on the part of England, merely to obtain from America a cessation of hostilities. Not only their independance was recognized in the most explicit terms: territory, rivers, lakes, commerce, islands, ports and fortified places, Indian Allies, loyalists; all were given up to the Congress. In fixing the Boundaries between Canada and the United States, ideal limits were laid down amidst unknown tracts. Franklyn, who, as one of the four American

Commissioners appointed to manage the treaty, affixed his name to the instrument of provisional pacification; enjoyed at the advanced period of fourscore years, the satisfaction of witnessing the complete emancipation of his countrymen from Great Britain, to effect which he had so eminently contributed by his talents and exertions. Few subjects, born and educated, like him in the inferior classes of society, have, in any age of the earth, without drawing the sword in person, obtained so gratifying a triumph over their legitimate Sovereign, or have aided to produce a greater political revolution on the face of the Globe.

December.] A first Minister who possessed so slender a portion of moral reputation, of popularity, or of influence over the two Houses of Parliament, as Lord Shelburne; would, it was supposed, have employed the interval subsequent to the Prorogation, in strengthening his tenure of power. Unless he either regained the Heads of the Rockingham Party, or conciliated Lord North, which last measure seemed to be more natural; it was obvious that he might, at any moment, be crushed by the union of those leaders. On the opening of the Session, it soon however became

evident that no such approximation had taken place, and that the Administration relied for support on its own proper strength. But, on the other hand, Lord North and Mr. Fox, though both acted in opposition to Government, and though both joined in treating with reprobation, or with ridicule, the provisional treaty concluded with America, remained nevertheless still in complete and hostile separation. Scarcely did they refrain, on every occasion that presented itself, from personal reflections on each other; and when Fox ventured to divide the House, on the question of addressing the King, to lay before them some parts of the provisional Articles, he was left in a Minority of only forty-six; while the Ministry, supported by Lord North, displayed an imposing Majority of two hundred and nineteen. Neither the peace made with the American States, nor even the recognition of their Independance by Great Britain, being however in themselves complete, till a Treaty should be likewise concluded with France, attention became wholly directed to the issue of the pending negociations with that Court. On their termination, whether it should prove hostile or pacific, all men foresaw that the two great parties, who now stood

at bay, without joining each other, or uniting with Lord Shelburne; would necessarily take some decisive step, most beneficial, or most injurious in its results, to the Administration.

Though Parliament sat for only a very short period during the month of December, scarcely exceeding a fortnight, previous to their adjournment till after Christmas; yet one very interesting Debate, which arose in the House of Commons, produced a material operation on some articles of the peace then negotiating with the House of Bourbon. Rumours which acquired considerable, if not implicit credit, were circulated throughout the Metropolis, stating that Lord Shelburne had not only manifested a disposition, but had even consented with the approbation of the Cabinet, to cede Gibraltar to Spain, on certain conditions. They were indeed of such a nature, as in the estimation of many able men, would have fully justified Ministers in restoring to the Catholic King, that expensive fortress. I have been assured that Charles the Third, in his eagerness to re-annex Gibraltar to the Spanish Monarchy, offered in exchange for it, the Canary Islands, together with Porto Rico in the West Indies: the former of which pos-

sessions, from their situation in the Atlantic, their Climate, and productions, might be rendered most valuable acquisitions to Great Britain; while the latter Island must be considered as scarcely inferior to Jamaica in extent, fertility, and political importance. Gibraltar, however dear to the national vanity, and whatever flattering recollections the late glorious defence might awaken, could not, it was imagined, be put in competition with the Canaries and Porto Rico. Sir George Howard, who was himself a General Officer, having nevertheless unexpectedly provoked, and brought forward in the House of Commons, a discussion relative to that fortress, and the possibility that its cession or alienation to Spain, might be in contemplation; it soon appeared that men of all parties were imbued with partialities so warm and violent in its favor, and such indignation was manifested at the bare idea of ceding it, even for any equivalent however valuable, that the intention was relinquished. The substance of the Debate having been taken down in short hand, by a person stationed in the Gallery, and immediately communicated to Lord Shelburne, he dispatched a Messenger with it, the next morning, to our Minister at Paris, Mr. Fitzherbert, now

Lord St. Helens; enjoining him to lay it before the Count de Vergennes, and the Count D'Aranda. I know from good authority, that the latter Nobleman, who was then the Spanish Embassador at the Court of Versailles, had received the most positive instructions not to sign any peace with Great Britain, however favourable the terms might be in other respects, unless the cession of Gibraltar constituted one of the articles of the treaty. Finding nevertheless, after the communication above mentioned, that no equivalent would be accepted for its Restitution; D'Aranda, in disobedience to these orders, finally affixed his name to the Act, taking on himself the risk and the responsibility.

January, 1783.] Throughout a considerable part of the month of January, the greatest fluctuation of public opinion prevailed relative to the final success of the Treaties agitating at Paris; and as late as the 18th, the Queen's Birth-day, the prevalent ideas in the Drawing-room, were generally adverse to the probability of a favorable issue: but, five days afterwards, intelligence arrived of Peace having been signed at Versailles. Lord Keppel, either repenting of his conduct in having quitted Fox after the Marquis of Rocking-

ham's decease; or suspicious of the approaching Dissolution of the actual Ministry; or, as he asserted afterwards on the Debate which took place in the House of Peers, disapproving the Articles of the Treaty recently concluded; immediately resigned his employment of First Lord of the Admiralty. He was succeeded by Lord Howe, and early in the month of February, the Marquis of Carmarthen was named Embassador to the Court of France. Though the House of Commons had met on the 21st of January, pursuant to its Adjournment, yet no business of moment was brought forward, either by Ministers, or by their Opponents, during the considerable interval of near a Month which elapsed, previous to the Day fixed for discussing the Articles of the Peace, in both Houses of Parliament. They had intermediately been exchanged and ratified by the two Governments. A more than ordinary interest was excited on the subject throughout the Nation; the stability or dismission of the Administration, evidently depending on the parliamentary approval or disapprobation of the Treaty. In the House of Lords, there seemed to be, indeed, little danger of incurring a Vote of Censure. But, it was otherwise in the Lower House, where the Minister, in addition to his

own slender personal strength, and the individuals holding Offices under the Crown, could only expect support, either from persons inclined to maintain indifferently every government; or from those independent Members, who disregarding all motives of party, might be induced to approve the treaties, on the ground of their abstract merits, and their just claim to national gratitude.

Facts such as these, which were palpable to all, could not possibly escape the attention of him who was most deeply interested in their result. And it has always appeared to persons uninformed, one of the most inexplicable events of our time, that Lord Shelburne, who must have perceived the impossibility of maintaining himself in power, after the conclusion of peace, without the aid of one or of the other of the two great parties in Opposition; yet allowed Parliament to meet, for the express purpose of discussing the merits of the peace, without conciliating previously the leaders of either side. Was he then indifferent to the preservation of that Office, which he had acquired with so much address, and not unaccompanied with a degree of obloquy? No person can believe or suppose it. Neither his adherents nor his enemies ever maintained such

an opinion. How therefore are we to interpret a conduct so contrary to all the dictates of ambition, policy, and self-interest? In order to explain it, I shall state such circumstances as have been related to me, from persons well informed, which will at least throw considerable light upon the subject.

It seemed certainly most natural, that of the two parties excluded from power, Lord Shelburne should have addressed himself to that body of men which still considered Lord North as it's head. To many of the individuals composing it, I know that he did in fact make advances, either personally or by his friends. The American war being terminated, the principal object of disunion between the late and the present First Minister, was at an end. Lord Shelburne was moreover known to have pertinaciously resisted the concession of Independence to America. His reluctance and duplicity, or ambiguity, relative to granting *unconditional* Independance to the thirteen Colonies, formed one of the most prominent points of accusation against him, on the part of Fox and the Rockingham party. It could not be doubted that the King, who, availing himself of favorable circumstances, had elevated the First

Lord of the Treasury, to the place that he held; and who deprecated nothing so much as being a second time compelled to take Fox into his councils; would secretly approve, and would sincerely promote, any measure tending to exclude him from Administration. Of all political unions that could be effected, an alliance between Lord North and Lord Shelburne, it was therefore assumed, must be most agreeable to the Sovereign. Nor, as I have been assured, did there exist any insurmountable personal antipathies or impediments between those two noble persons, which could have prevented such an event taking place. But, though *they* might have been willing to coalesce, there were other individuals in the Ministry, not of so tractable or so conciliating a disposition. Mr. Pitt, and the Duke of Richmond, both inflexibly refused to sit in Cabinet with Lord North, whom they considered as the chief author of the American war; and they remained firm upon that article. Such an obstacle was neither to be surmounted, nor to be removed. The Duke of Richmond might, indeed, have been dismissed, without any apprehension of very injurious results: but Mr. Pitt was essential to the existence and duration of the Ministry. His high character and his name, joined to

his eminent talents, formed the best security that Lord Shelburne possessed, for carrying any measure through the House of Commons. If, therefore, in order to gain Lord North, he had thrown Pitt into Opposition, no exertions could have long resisted his and Fox's united attacks, fighting side by side. And the House itself would probably have reprobated such a junction, when attained by the expulsion of Pitt from power. These causes prevented any attempt being made to gain Lord North's support, by admitting him and his principal friends to places in the Cabinet; and his friendship, it was obvious, could not be obtained on any inferior terms.

February.] In this perplexing Dilemma, overtures of Conciliation were made to Fox, on the part of Administration, offering to replace him and his connexions in Office, under Lord Shelburne, as First Minister. The King was induced, though reluctantly, to allow and to approve of the Proposals, on the ground of State necessity; it being esteemed a less evil, to admit Fox into the Cabinet by negociation, than to incur the risk of his entering it by storm. In the first case, he would remain still in a Minority, while the

Treasury would be completely independant of him; whereas in the second event, he would dictate the law. But Fox, though he professed himself willing to make a part of an Administration formed upon a broad Basis, and therefore disposed to listen to the proposition, exacted one indispensable preliminary; namely Lord Shelburne's dismission or resignation. Unless the Treasury were placed in the hands of the Duke of Portland, as the new recognized head of the Rockingham Party; and unless Lord Shelburne were wholly excluded from a place in the Cabinet, he peremptorily refused to accede to any terms of accommodation. With all the other principal individuals composing the Ministry, he declared his readiness to act; but, personally to Lord Shelburne, his repugnance continued insurmountable, and could not be removed by any efforts.

Such, as I have always understood, were the two leading principles on which was subsequently reared that celebrated junction between Lord North and Fox, which, from its extraordinary nature, and more extraordinary effects, has obtained in English History, by way of distinction from all other political unions or alliance ever contracted in our time, the name of

"*The Coalition.*" The proscription of Lord North by Pitt, and of Lord Shelburne by Fox, of necessity drove these two excluded Ministers into each others arms; at once obliterated all past causes of offence between them; and impelled them, banishing every retrospect, as well as in some measure setting public opinion at defiance, only to look forward to the joint possession of power. As the 17th of February stood fixed for the consideration of the Articles of Peace, in both Houses of Parliament; and as Lord North disapproved of many of those Articles, no less strongly than Fox; it became obvious that they must, in all cases, divide together on that night, against the Administration. And if they should find themselves in a Majority, as was highly probable, it seemed to follow that the Ministers must retire from Office. But, in order to avail themselves of their triumph, and to form a new Administration, some mutual understanding, if not some principles of permanent accommodation, became absolutely necessary to both Individuals. Otherwise, however victorious they might prove in Parliament, they would probably derive no benefit from their superiority; and Lord Shelburne, though vanquished in the House of Commons,

might still contrive to retain his seat in the Cabinet, as First Minister.

These considerations, in themselves most forcible, acquiring hourly strength as the day approached for the discussion of the Peace, produced some symptoms of mutual tendency towards reconciliation. Never, perhaps, did two men exist, more inclined by nature to oblivion of injuries, or to sentiments of forgiveness, than Lord North and Fox! The latter, whatever might be his defects of character, possessed in an eminent degree, placability and magnanimity of mind. "*Amicitiæ sempiternæ, Inimicitiæ placabiles,*" was a Maxim always in his mouth. The former, too indolent to retain the burthen of enmity, and conscious that Fox's hostility towards him had always been more political than personal; gladly deposited his resentments and his injuries, at the feet of his interest and ambition. Both equally concurred in the necessity of agreeing on some plan of concerted action, before they took their places, side by side, on the Opposition Bench. But, however deeply they might be impressed with these feelings, they nevertheless abstained from any direct interview, leaving all matters to the inter-

vention of mutual friends. The Honorable George Augustus North, eldest son of Lord North, then Member for Harwich, and afterwards himself Earl of Guildford, acted as the Negociator for his father on this occasion: while the Honorable Colonel Fitzpatrick, Fox's intimate friend and companion, conducted the treaty on the other part. Mr. North by no means wanted talents; but in address, capacity, and accomplishments, the latter possessed an infinite superiority. Each, actuated by a warm desire to conduct the business to a successful issue, exerted his utmost efforts for the purpose. Two or three days elapsed in conferences and discussions: Nor was it till a very late hour of the night of the 16th of February, that, after many visits to and fro, between St. James's Street and Grosvenor Square, where Lord North then resided, they finally settled the outlines of a Convention; by which, on the part of the two principals it was stipulated, that if they effected a change of Administration, the Treasury should be given to the Duke of Portland; that Lord North should likewise take a Cabinet Office; that a fair partition of the spoils, in other words, of the great posts and emoluments of the State, should be made between the two

parties, who agreed henceforward to coalesce. And, lastly, that in the Debate of the approaching Evening, they should speak, act, and divide in concert.

17th February.] Such were the general Preliminaries of the "Coalition." Many difficulties on both sides, which impeded the progress of the negociation, protracted its termination; nor did either Lord North or Fox retire to rest till four or five o'clock in the Morning, when the business was at length concluded. Fox, accustomed to pass the greater part of the night at Brookes's, appeared in the House of Commons with his usual freshness on the ensuing Evening; and manifested during the Debate that ensued, neither inattention, lassitude, nor fatigue. But, Lord North, whose natural somnolency was encreased, by having sat up for so many hours of the preceding night, under circumstances of considerable agitation, as well as by the prodigious heat arising from a crouded house; after taking his seat near his new ally, on the Opposition Bench, found himself so overcome by sleep, that its effect became irresistible. Unwilling, probably, to exhibit such a Spectacle, at such

a moment, which would have excited matter of animadversion, or of ridicule, to both parties; he atlength quitted his seat, and came up into the Gallery. I had placed myself there; immediately over the Treasury Bench, every part of the House below being filled. Lord North having seated himself by me, made various efforts to keep himself awake; but to accomplish it, exceeded his power. As the discussion had already taken a very personal turn; severe sarcasms, as well as reproaches, being levelled from the Treasury Bench, against the unnatural Coalition just formed; particularly by Mr. Dundas, who stigmatized it with the strongest Epithets; he requested me to awaken him, as often as any such expressions should be used by Ministers. I did so many times; but, when he had listened for a few Minutes, he as often relapsed into repose. At the end of about an hour and a half, during the greater portion of which time he seemed scarcely sensible to any thing that passed, he began to rouse himself. By degrees he recovered his perception; and having heard from my mouth, some of the most interesting, or acrimonious passages that had taken place while he was asleep, he went down again into the body of the House, placed himself by Fox on the floor, and made

one of the most able, brilliant, as well as entertaining Speeches, that I ever heard him pronounce within those walls. No man who listened to it, could have imagined that he had lost a single sentence of the preceding Debate, or that his faculties had been clouded by fatigue and want of rest.

Lord John Cavendish, whom Fox always selected for special and important occasions; as his high character for integrity and uprightness, spread a sort of veil over the irregularities of his party; moved an Amendment on that night, to the Address proposed by the friends of Administration. Lord John's Amendment was however couched in terms so guarded, with a view to secure as many Votes as possible, that it might rather be termed a hesitation in approving, than any direct censure on the Peace. Even Lord North, who afterwards proposed a second Amendment, in which he recommended the American Loyalists to His Majesty's consideration; implied, more than he asserted, that they had been forgotten or abandoned by the framers of the Articles of Pacification concluded with the thirteen Colonies. The Coalition, avowed by Fox, was not only defended with the

boldness and decision that marked his character; but he retorted on the Lord Advocate, all the acrimonious expressions which fell from the latter, upon the sudden union of two such inveterate Opponents. Mr. Townsend, as Secretary of State, excelled himself in his defence of the Peace, and may really be said to have in some measure earned on that night, the Peerage which he soon afterwards obtained. I never saw him display so much animation, nor heard him manifest such ability. Nor was Pitt wanting to himself, or to his party. But, all their efforts proved unavailing to sustain an Administration, which had been originally established on too shallow foundations. After a Debate, protracted till eight o'clock in the Morning, they were left in a Minority of sixteen. Only nine Votes therefore, taken from the Coalition, and transferred to Ministers, would have given them a Majority; and above four hundred and thirty Members voted on the occasion.

I composed one of the Majority, on that memorable night. But I owe it nevertheless to truth and to candour to acknowledge, that when I consider the articles of the Peace concluded by Lord Shelburne, after the lapse of

thirty years, I am inclined to view it through a more favourable medium, than I did at the time. Unquestionably, of the *three* Treaties, namely, those signed with *France*, *Spain*, and *America*; — for with *Holland* nothing definitive had been arranged; — the American Treaty was much the most humiliating, as well as injurious to Great Britain. Besides the unconditional recognition of the independance of the Colonies, and the cession of so many fortified places, which it is difficult to suppose that the Americans could ever have taken from us by force of arms; our abandoning the Loyalists seemed, in the estimation of people the most dispassionate, to affix a degree of degradation and dishonour on the Nation itself. To Spain we likewise ceded East Florida, in addition to West Florida and Minorca, of both which, that power had already obtained possession. But, in recompence for these sacrifices, it must be remembered, that France restored to us all our captured Islands in the West Indies, with the single exception of Tobago; while we possessed nothing to offer her in return, except the restitution of St. Lucie. All the stipulations respecting our possessions in the East Indies; those relative to the Gum

trade, on the coast of Africa; and the Articles regulating the right of fishery on the banks of Newfoundland; if not favourable or advantageous in themselves, might yet have been signed between two Crowns treating on equal terms. Nor, when we consider the exhausted state of England at the close of the American War, could they justly be regarded as unbecoming us, in order to dissolve the formidable combination then leagued against this country.

While, however, I thus readily admit Lord Shelburne's title to national approbation, if not gratitude, for the Peace of January, 1783; I must maintain, and I trust satisfactorily to prove, that if Lord North, instead of going out, as he did, in March, 1782, had remained in Office ten months longer, he would have concluded at least as advantageous, if not a more beneficial Treaty. We shall in fact find on examining the subject, that Lord North either adopted or laid down all the foundations, on which his Successor in Office reared that superstructure. In other words, that Lord Shelburne only used the materials left or provided him by his predecessor. The Peace rested on seven distinct grounds or principles, of which the first was the Recognition

of American Independence. But, Lord North manifested a much greater readiness to obey the wishes of the House of Commons on that leading point, than was afterwards shewn by Lord Shelburne, who did not yield, till he was outvoted in the Cabinet: whereas Lord North, after General Conway's successful Motion of the 22d of February, declaring "the Attempt to reduce the Colonies to obe-"dience by force, impracticable," immediately took Measures for the purpose. On the 5th of March, a fortnight before he laid down his power, Wallace, then Attorney-General, moved in his place, for leave to bring in a Bill, "to enable His Majesty to "conclude a Truce or Peace with the revolted "Colonies in America." Fox affected to treat it with derision, because he feared, its operation on Parliament, and on the public mind, might prolong the existence of an Administration which he had so nearly run down: but no impartial man questioned the First Minister's sincerity; and the Victory of Congress in compelling Lord North to treat with America as a Sovereign Power, would have been more gratifying to the States, than the same triumph obtained over any other Minister of Great Britain.

The second cause that produced Peace, was Sir George Rodney's victory over De Grasse, which at once overturning all the plans of Vergennes in the West Indies, secured Jamaica from any further Attack on the part of France. Of this splendid victory, though Fox reaped all the benefit, Lord North and Lord Sandwich had unquestionably the whole merit. We may even safely assert or assume, that if the Rockingham Administration had forced their way into Office three Months earlier, the Action of the 12th of April 1782, would never have taken place, or might have had a very different termination. It is not pretended that Pigot possessed any other merit than his connexion with Fox, cemented at Brooke's. The Measure itself, of sending him out to deprive Rodney of the Command, excited just indignation: nor did he perform a single act of energy after his arrival, which could have accelerated or facilitated the negociations of Peace. I believe, he never captured any thing except a Spanish Polacre. Elliot's destruction of the Spanish Gun-boats before Gibraltar, on the 13th September; by overwhelming all the Projects of Charles the Third for the reduction of that Fortress, laid the third foundation of the Treaty, as it dis-

posed the Cabinet of Madrid to terminate the War. Happily, Fox did not recall Elliot, as he had done Rodney, nor send Burgoyne to supersede him. Lord Howe's most able Manœuvres, in supplying Gibraltar with Stores of every kind, notwithstanding the opposition of France and Spain, formed the fourth groundwork of the Peace. In the nomination of that great Naval Officer to the Command of the Fleet, and in that Measure solely, had Lord Shelburne any participation or share, as contributing to terminate the contest. Nor would it be candid to deprive him of the merit which he may thereby claim; but, neither ought we to forget that Admiral Darby had effected the same service in the preceding year, and had relieved Gibraltar, under nearly similar impediments.

The three last foundations of general pacification were laid in the East; where, as early as 1778, Lord North had ably anticipated the French machinations, by getting possession of Pondicherry. Of these leading causes, the most essential, perhaps, may be deemed the separate Peace made with the Mharattas; a measure exclusively due to that First Minister, who in the Spring of the year 1781, sent out Mr. Macpherson, since

Governor General of Bengal, and created a Baronet, as a Member of the Supreme Council. I know that his secret Instructions were, to endeavour by every exertion in his power, and even if necessary, by considerable sacrifices, to terminate the Mharatta War. In compliance with those directions, on his arrival at Madras in October, 1781, without waiting to consult Hastings, who was then at a distance from Calcutta; Mr. Macpherson, together with Lord Macartney, Sir Edward Hughes, and the Nabob of Arcot, Mahommed Ally, acting together in concert, addressed letters jointly to the Peshwah, at Poonah, expressing to him, in the name of the Sovereign and Ministry of England, their sincere and ardent inclination to Peace. It followed in a very short space of time, and flowed immediately from this source. Lord Sandwich, who sent out Sir Edward Hughes to command the British Fleet in the East Indies, may claim the principal or exclusive merit of having laid the sixth Basis of the pacification of January, 1783. For, though that naval Commander did not vanquish Suffrein, as Rodney defeated De Grasse, yet he repulsed the French Admiral, when we were inferior to him in number of ships; disabled the enemy's vessels, and finally com-

pelled him to postpone his projects of co-operation with Hyder Ally; thus protracting the contest, till intelligence of a general pacification reached India. The last groundwork of peace, was due to Hastings, as Governor General of Bengal, and to the Supreme Council, for the promptitude with which, after Hyder's successful irruption into the Carnatic in 1780, they dispatched Sir Eyre Coote with military and pecuniary supplies, to the aid of that nearly subverted Presidency. He first arrested the progress of the Sultan of Mysore, and finally compelled him to retreat across the Mountains of the Ghauts, into his own dominions. The vast fabrick of British power in the East, originally convulsed by the errors or incapacity of the Bombay Government, degraded by Rumbold's mal-administration, and perhaps exposed to hazard by Hastings's ambition, was ultimately preserved and strengthened. When we fairly examine and appreciate these facts, we shall see that though Lord Shelburne signed, or rather *concluded* the Peace of 1783, yet Lord North's Administration *made* it. In fact, though no Minister, however able or popular, could have longer prosecuted the war for subjugating the Colonies, after near seven years of a ruinous and

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The first and leading cause was, the preservation of the British Constitution. Lord North, though he lost Armies, commercial Fleets, Garrisons, Islands, and Provinces; yet defended and preserved the Palladium of Civil Liberty. He transmitted to Lord Rockingham, in March, 1782, as he had received from the Duke of Grafton, in January 1770, that invaluable possession, inviolate. Our obligations to him are great and indelible: for never perhaps did any Minister surmount more severe attacks than he endured. The losses and disgraces of the American war, followed by heavy annual Loans, gave rise to Meetings and Associations, whose professed object was not only a change of Administration, but to effect reforms and alterations in the parliamentary Representation. These convocations of Freeholders, which began in the County of York, towards the end of 1779, soon spread over the Kingdom, and were adopted in the Capital at an early period of the year 1780. Their Resolutions, patriotic in profession, and perhaps in their intention, were not the less revolutionary in practice. Like the Clubs at Paris in 1790, they immediately appointed *Corresponding Committees*, whose duty it was to prepare *Plans of Association* for ameliorating the Constitution. Men

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of the highest rank, of the largest property, and of the most unsullied character, carried along by the torrent, and impatient to overturn the Ministry, lent themselves to the accomplishment of this work. As early as February, 1780, Sir George Savile, when presenting in the House of Commons, the York Petition, accompanied it with language such as Ireton or Fleetwood might have used, when addressing the Rump Parliament in 1652: Language calculated to intimidate, and appealing obviously to external interference. These menaces were outdone by Sir James Lowther, in April of the same year, on bringing up the Petition from Cumberland. He, whom, "Junius" denominates "the little contemptible tyrant of the North," threatened in his Place, that if, "the Grievances enumerated were not redressed, the Subscribers would withhold the Taxes;" thus attempting to overawe the Legislative Body whom he addressed. Fox, as might well be imagined, far exceeded his adherents, in the violence of his appeal to the People. On the 6th of April, 1780, the *Corresponding Committee* having convened the Inhabitants of Westminster, in Palace Yard, Fox read and commented on the Report presented by that Committee;

while the Dukes of Devonshire and of Portland were present at his side: but the Marquis of Rockingham absented himself. Government having very properly ordered out a Body of the Military Force, for the protection of Parliament, and suppression of tumult or violence; Fox proceeded so far as to declare in the House of Commons, that "if Soldiers "were thus let loose on the constitutional "Assemblages of the People, all who attended "them, must go armed." The Cardinal de Retz, when conducting the Parisian populace, and attempting to overturn the first Minister of that day, held and practised precisely the same doctrine. So would Mirabeau have done in our time; or Sir Francis Burdett, and Horne Tooke.

Nor were these the only adversaries with whom Lord North had to contend, when defending the Constitution. "The coldest bodies," says Junius, "warm with opposition; "the hardest sparkle in collision." Burke, who ten years later, drew forth his powerful artillery in defence of Monarchy, lent himself too much, at this period of his political life, it must reluctantly be owned, to the machinations of Party. Many of his parliamentary Speeches between 1779 and 1782, breathe the

Spirit of Faction, blended with intemperance of language, sometimes descending even to invective. Dunning, though brought up to the Bar, and possessed of an ample fortune acquired by his profession, yet levelled a vital blow at the Constitution of his Country, when, on the 24th of April, 1780, he moved in the House of Commons, "not to dissolve Parlia-" "ment, or to prorogue the Session, till proper" "measures should be adopted for diminish-" "ing the influence of the Crown, and correct-" "ing the other evils complained of in the Pe-" "titions." It is obvious that if such a resolution had passed, the King would have stood in the situation of Charles the First in 1641, as the Parliament would have been placed in the very Position of the House of Commons at that awful period of our history. Happily, Dunning's proposition was rejected by a Majority of fifty-one Votes, in a very full House. Fox, irritated to the most violent degree at the subversion of his hopes to drive Lord North from power, attributed his disappointment to the operation of ministerial corruption among the Members who voted on the occasion. But, it unquestionably resulted from the alarm excited among the moderate, independent part of the Assembly, who desired, indeed, to limit and

to reform, but not to annihilate, the power of the Crown. No man can doubt that if the prerogative of Prorogation and of Dissolution had been taken from the Sovereign, till every alledged grievance had been redressed, the Constitution must have been from that moment subverted, and a renewal of the Calamities of Charles the First's reign, must almost inevitably have followed. To Lord North, therefore, sustained by the King's firmness of character, we owe our Preservation from all the evils of a republican, if not a revolutionary Government. Since 1688, down to the year 1792, when we were menaced with the horrors of French Fraternization, it may be safely asserted that the British Constitution never incurred so imminent a danger of subversion, as in 1780.

To Mr. Pitt we are indebted for the second leading cause or principle of our national Re suscitation and recovery, after losing America. His Institution of the Sinking Fund of a Million Sterling, in the Spring of 1786, by its beneficial operation on the public Credit, Commerce, and Finances, might be said to revivify the State, and still continues to dispense with augmenting powers, its salutary

influence. The third source of our prosperity came from the East, where, without a Metaphor, the Sun of Britain rose, as it set in the West. Since 1783, our acquisitions and possessions in that portion of the Globe, have been perpetually in a State of Progression. All our losses on the Delaware and on the Chesapeake, have been more than compensated by our Conquests on the Ganges, or on the Coasts of Coromandel and Malabar. The augmentations of territory in Oude, as well as in Corah and Döoab, including Dehli itself, the Metropolis of the Mogul Princes; the seizure of the Carnatic; the dissolution of the Mysore Monarchy in the person of Tippoo Sultan; the reduction of Ceylon, and of the Cape of Good Hope, not to mention many inferior objects of attention; — these prodigious accumulations of Power and Wealth have obliterated almost the recollections of the American struggle, and have closed all the wounds caused by that unfortunate War. An annual Revenue of more than fifteen Millions Sterling raised in India, payable, not in Paper, but in Specie; together with the Commerce of the East, continually poured into our Harbours; have enabled us, after contending for nearly twenty years with the power of

France, successively wielded by Robespierre and by Bonaparte, to terminate the conflict in the most triumphant manner. I return to the progress of public affairs.

However much the Treaty of 1783, may be entitled to national approval, yet the members of that Administration at the head of which *Lord North* had so long presided, might, nevertheless, be fully justified in severely arraigning a Peace, which relinquished to America almost every point or object, for the maintenance of which *they* had contended, from 1775 down to 1782. *They* might justly feel indignant at the dereliction of the Loyalists; at the evacuation of New York and Charles Town; and at the sacrifice of immense tracts of territory, extending through near twenty degrees of Latitude, and as many of Longitude; including Indian Nations our Allies, and containing incalculable commercial advantages. When Lord Sackville and Lord Stormont, in the House of Peers, compared such a Treaty with past periods of our history, and accused the Ministry of doing acts more culpable, than even Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke had committed at Utrecht; they might at least be considered as speaking with

consistency, and in conformity to their avowed principles. But, it seems more difficult to conceive, and to explain, upon what ground *Fox* could reprobate such Preliminaries. *He* had loudly and repeatedly declaimed for successive years, on the indispensable necessity of obtaining almost any Peace, however comparatively bad, as imperiously demanded by the fallen condition of Great Britain. *He*, who, considering the Americans as originally justified in resisting the mother country, had often undertaken their defence in the House of Commons: while he always stigmatized the Loyalists with every opprobrious or contemptuous Epithet. *He*, whom I had, myself, heard declare from the same side the House, not twelve Months before, on the fifth day of March, 1782, that "whenever "he should enter into any terms with an "individual of Lord North's Cabinet, he "would rest satisfied to be called the most in-"famous of mankind." Adding, that "he "never could nourish the idea of coa-"lescing with Ministers, who had proved "themselves devoid of honour and honesty; "as in the hands of such men, he would not "for a moment entrust his own honour." To varnish over, therefore, so complete a change

of language, sentiments, and system, required all those talents, that bold eloquence, and disregard of public opinion, which met in *him*. I never indeed regarded him as animated by any other motives, in his opposition to the Peace of 1783, than ambition and desire of power. Personally odious to the King, as he well knew himself to be, on account of his private irregularities, not less than from the line of political action which he had embraced during many years; he beheld no mode or chance of speedily entering the Cabinet, except by uniting at once with Lord North. Those persons who think that abilities such as his, ought not to have been lost to his country, or excluded from the Councils of the Crown, will however see cause probably, to justify in some degree, his sacrifice of political principle, to an over-ruling necessity. But, it became apparent by the events that soon followed the Coalition of 1783, how different a sentence the majority of the nation passed on that memorable union. The people beheld in it a complete renunciation of every object for which Fox had affected to contend; and they regarded, not merely with indifference, but with satisfaction, his subsequent expulsion from Office.

Lord North's junction with the party which had so long opposed him, has always appeared to me to admit of much more palliation, than the conduct of Fox and his adherents. The former Nobleman, by no means in very affluent circumstances, encumbered with a numerous family, saw himself proscribed and excluded from the Cabinet, for having unsuccessfully maintained the Prerogative of the Crown, and the Supremacy of Parliament, against the American Insurgents. In this situation, unprotected by the Sovereign, who was unable to extend any assistance to him; and unpopular with the nation, because he had been unfortunate; Fox opened his arms, and offered him an alliance. Was he bound to reject it, and thus pass a sentence of political exclusion on himself?—But, even if he had so done, worse evils presented themselves in prospect. A union between Fox and Pitt, would have eventually produced, in all probability, his own impeachment, and that of other members of his former Cabinet. Nor could he have found any security from such a prosecution, either in the royal authority, in the adherence of the House of Commons, or in the affection of the country. He might have been made the victim and the sacrifice, for

the loss of empire, for the disgraces, defeats, capitulations, and ruinous expenditure of an unfortunate war. Fox and Burke had a hundred times menaced him with the block. Pitt, who, it was evident, entertained similar opinions respecting his Administration, did not at all conceal them. By accepting the overtures of the Rockingham party, Lord North, therefore, at least secured his personal safety, and opened to himself an avenue to the resumption of power. It was not, as I have always thought, the act of uniting with Fox, that in itself disgraced him; but, the too ready subserviency with which he afterwards lent himself to every measure, which that enterprizing and ambitious Statesman, having again forced his way into the Cabinet, thought it necessary to adopt, in order to maintain himself in a situation, which he had attained, contrary to the wishes of his Sovereign.

The victory obtained by the new Coalition, over Ministers, in the House of Commons, however flattering it might be to their hopes, yet being by no means decisive; and the Peace having been approved in the upper House; in order to compel Lord Shelburne's resignation, it became necessary to express in more affirmative

language, a parliamentary disapprobation of the Preliminaries. For this purpose, four days after the first Debate, a second discussion took place, when a Motion or Resolution to the effect above mentioned, was brought forward; Lord John Cavendish lending himself again to introduce the business. It was indeed a service of some danger and delicacy, requiring all the reputation which that Nobleman enjoyed for political rectitude, to protect his friends from the imputations excited by the late Coalition. He endeavoured to justify it against the severe animadversions of Powis, and of other Members who had generally voted with the Rockingham Party; by comparing Fox's union with Lord North, to the Administration formed in June, 1757, when the first Mr. Pitt coalesced with the Duke of Newcastle, whom he had during many years opposed and reprobated. But, however analagous in many respects that transaction might be, yet it failed in carrying the moral conviction to the minds of his hearers, which Lord John aspired to produce by his comparison. The Peace was again attacked and defended on its own proper merits, at great length, with equal ingenuity, asperity, and profound knowledge of the subject. Those who heard Mr. Pitt, address the House on that even-

ing, cannot easily forget the impression made upon his audience, by a Speech which might be said to unite all the powers of argument, eloquence, and impassioned declamation. He seemed to fight, indeed, as Cæsar did at Munda, not merely for empire, or for power; but, for life. After defending, article by article, the Treaties concluded; he finished by deprecating "the ill omened and "baneful alliance" which had just taken place between Lord North and Fox, as teeming with pernicious effects of every kind to the country. Then reverting to the consequences which it might produce personally to himself, he professed his readiness to retire to a private station without regret. Alluding to so material an impending change in his own condition, he exclaimed,

"Fortuna sævo læta Negotio, et
Ludum insolentem ludere pertinax,
Transmutat incertas honores,
Nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna.
Laudo manentem: si celeres quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit."——

With an admirable presence of mind, which never forsook him, he here paused; and conscious that the words of the Roman poet immediately following, "*et mea virtute me in-*

"*volvo*," might seem to imply a higher idea of his own merit or disinterestedness, than it would become him to avow, he cast his eyes on the floor. A moment or two of silence elapsed, while all attention was directed towards him from every quarter of the House. During this interval he slowly drew his handkerchief from his pocket, passed it once or twice across his lips, and then recovering as it were from his temporary embarrassment, he added with Emphasis, striking his hand on the table,

" ——— probamque
" Pauperiem sine dote quæro."

Perhaps a more masterly and beautiful piece of oratorical acting, is not to be found in Antiquity. Even if we suppose the whole passage to have been studied and prepared, yet the delicacy of the omission is not less admirable. I believe, however, that both the lines which he cited, and the one which he suppressed, were all equally suggested to him by his feelings and his judgment at the time. Its effect on that part of the House which perfectly understood it, corresponded to its merit. But Mr. Pitt, who well knew how large a part of his audience, especially among the Country Gentlemen, were little

conversant in the writings of the Augustan Age, or familiar with Horace, always displayed great caution in borrowing from those classic sources. In the lapse of fourteen years that I have heard him almost daily address the House of Commons, I question if he made in all, more than eight or ten citations. Fox and Sheridan, though not equally severe in that respect, yet never abused or injudiciously expended the stores of antient literature that they possessed. Burke's enthusiasm, his exhaustless memory, and luxuriant imagination, more frequently carried him away into the times of Virgil and Cicero: while Barré usually condescended, whenever he quoted Latin, to translate for the benefit of the County Members.

21st February.] A minority of *seventeen*, in which the Ministry remained at the close of the Debate, which took place at a very late hour, and in a very crowded House of Commons, where near four hundred Members voted; seemed to secure the triumph of the Coalition. Yet, as no direct censure had hitherto been passed upon the Administration; and as the condemnation expressed relative to the Peace, was couched in very moderate terms; simply

stating that "the concessions made, were "greater than our adversaries were entitled "to demand;" it did not by any means follow, that a change in the government would take place. Lord North himself had sufficiently demonstrated, during the two Sessions of 1779 and 1780, how little effect a majority had, in compelling him to retire from Office; and the political, if not moral disapprobation, felt at the recent junction of two men who had so long condemned and reprobated each other, pervaded to a certain degree, all ranks. Even the very majority which had disapproved of the Treaties, as inadequate to our just expectations, yet might not follow up their Vote by any personal attack on Ministers; or if they did, might fail to carry the House with them. And if so, the Coalition would remain seated, as before, on the Opposition Bench, without deriving any benefit from their late success. A first Lord of the Treasury, who, to conscious integrity, joined fortitude and resources of character, seemed exempt from any necessity of resigning, on account of the danger of Impeachment; and might still, by protracting the struggle, terminate it advantageously to himself. Such were the opinions at that time generally entertained,

and the expectations formed, both in, and out of Parliament.

But, all these political speculations were suddenly overturned by Lord Shelburne's immediate resignation. Without waiting for any broader hint, or trying by any exertions to perpetuate his possession of power, he retired from Ministry, as so many of his predecessors had done during the present reign. There has always appeared to be something mysterious in the motives which impelled him thus precipitately, if not prematurely, to abandon a situation which he had attained with so much labour, as well as address, and from which he can scarcely be said to have been driven. So singular a fact was variously explained or interpreted at the time. As even his opponents neither attributed to him want of ambition, nor any defect of firmness, it became requisite to discover and to assign other reasons for his conduct. Rumours, which sunk deep in the public mind, were not only spread, but remained uncontradicted, asserting that Lord Shelburne had not scrupled to avail himself of his official situation, and the knowledge of various kinds that it conferred, for purposes

of private emolument. It was pretended, that during the period which preceded the late Peace, and while the Negociations were still pending; persons, subsequently ascertained to have acted by his secret directions, had speculated largely, as well as advantageously, in the public Funds. The active malignity of his enemies impelled them to trace these concealed agents, and to obtain proofs, real or fictitious, of the fact. Even the names of Brokers, and the sums actually purchased, to an immense amount, which were maintained to have been done on Lord Shelburne's account, were accurately specified. Similar accusations had been, indeed, made, as I have before observed, against Lord Bute in 1762; who then inhabited the House in Berkeley Square, which the actual First Minister had purchased of him, and now occupied. It was commonly said "to have been constructed by one Peace, "and paid for by another." If these reports originated only in political hostility, it must be admitted that Lord Shelburne was most unfortunate; no such imputations having been ever thrown on Lord North, on Fox, or on Pitt while in power, even by their most implacable adversaries.

In addition to the pretended facts above related, others were invented or enumerated, strongly corroborating them. It was said to be matter of notoriety, that previous to his coming into office as First Minister, Lord Shelburne's landed property in Ireland, as well as his estates at Bowood in Wiltshire, were all greatly encumbered. His enemies asserted, that soon after the conclusion of Peace, the mortgages were paid off, and his debts discharged. But, a circumstance which made a greater impression, arose from the weight which Pitt himself involuntarily gave to these allegations, by his own line of conduct towards Lord Shelburne. There seemed, indeed, an internal evidence in Pitt's mode of acting, which implied his disapprobation, either of that Nobleman's general character, or of some censurable act done by him while in employment. For, though scarcely ten months elapsed before Pitt came again into power, yet he never associated Lord Shelburne to any share of it, nor would even consent to give him a place in the Cabinet, as Lord President, or as Lord Privy Seal. So pointed an exclusion of the man, who had first called him up to the Councils of the Sovereign, and placed him there as Chancellor

of the Exchequer, at three and twenty, can scarcely be explained or accounted for, except by some such supposition. It is true that Pitt pronounced, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, from the Treasury Bench, the highest Encomiums on his principal, during the course of the discussions relative to the Peace. In his memorable Speech of the 21st of February, he even alluded with indignant warmth, to the "arts of defamation" which Lord Shelburne's enemies adopted, for the purpose of degrading him in the national estimation: arts, of which Pitt professed his scorn, as well as his conviction of their falsehood. But, either he subsequently altered his opinion, or his actions contradicted his professions. That towards the end of 1784, when Pitt was established in power, he advised His Majesty to raise Lord Shelburne to the rank of a British Marquis, must likewise be admitted. But, that Title was understood to be given, (like the Earldom of Lonsdale, conferred by Pitt on Sir James Lowther, earlier in the same year), as payment in full from the first Minister, for all past obligations or services. Lord Shelburne, after his resignation, seemed in fact to be regarded as politically extinct, though still in the full enjoyment of all his faculties of body and

mind, nor at all supposed to want ambition. The Marquis of Lansdown, as a Peer of Parliament, sometimes took a part in the Debates of the upper House; but he never openly aspired again to become first Lord of the Treasury, nor even to enter the Cabinet.

March.] Throughout the whole proceeding of the Ministerial change that took place at this time, there was something personal, which attached exclusively to himself. *He* resigned, almost immediately after the second Debate, of which I have spoken; but *the Administration* was by no means on that account, at an end. Pitt, far from following his example, remained in office more than five weeks, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, after the first Lord of the Treasury had retired; a circumstance unprecedented in our History! — An extraordinary and anomalous interval of time followed Lord Shelburne's resignation, during which, the functions of government may be said to have suffered a suspension; while the King, the Ministry, and the Candidates for power, stood looking at each other. William the Third never displayed more steadiness or determination, at any period of his life, either when Prince of Orange, or after

his elevation to the Crown of England, than George the Third manifested, throughout the whole of this "Interregnum," as it was denominated. Though his first Minister had quitted him, he did not abandon himself, or forsake those individuals who remained faithful to him. On the contrary, he made the most desperate efforts to avoid passing under a yoke, which he considered as equally painful to himself, and pernicious to his people.

The *Coalition* having twice defeated Administration in the House of Commons, and having compelled Lord Shelburne to retire, considered the business as effected, and their triumph secure. Resting therefore on their Arms, without attempting to push their advantages farther, they waited till the King should send to the two leaders, in order to form a new Ministry. But, in this expectation, however natural, they greatly deceived themselves. That Prince, as if conscious that Lord Shelburne constituted the principal, and the most vulnerable object of attack, having disembarrassed his Councils of the weight that encumbered them, endeavoured to repair the breach, and to form a new rampart against Lord North and Fox. It might per-

haps have been imagined, that the presence of the former Nobleman in Cabinet, and the share of Power which must necessarily be allotted to him and his friends, in the formation of a new Government; would have tranquillized the King's mind, by affording a security against the attempts or character of the latter statesman. But, he knew by the experience of many years, the pliability and easiness of Lord North's nature: nor was he unacquainted with the energy of Fox's mind, or unapprized of the efforts that he would probably make, in order to cement, and to perpetuate that elevation, which he had now nearly attained with so much difficulty. The King, who considered Fox as a man ruined in Fortune, of relaxed morals, and surrounded with a crowd of followers resembling him in these particulars; deprecated as the severest misfortune to himself and to his Subjects, the necessity of taking such a person, however eminent for capacity, into his confidence or councils. When we consider these circumstances, we shall not wonder at the long, though ineffectual resistance made by His Majesty, before he submitted to receive the Law from the "Coalition."

During the course of the Month of March,

every Measure was adopted on the part of the King, that promised to avert so great an evil, and to frustrate the hopes of the new Confederates. Earl Gower, to whom the place just vacated by Lord Shelburne, was offered, manifested the utmost readiness to accept it, if the probable means of maintaining himself there, could be demonstrated. But, by what expedient could a Minority of the House of Commons, be converted by him at once into a Majority? The difficulties being considered as insuperable, the experiment was therefore at length abandoned. Meanwhile, the *Coalition*, indignant at so long a delay, began to manifest symptoms of impatience. Mr. Coke, Member for the County of Norfolk, a gentleman equally respectable for character, and distinguished for his immense property, having given notice on the 19th of March, that if no Ministry should be formed in the course of two days, he would move an address to the Crown, on the subject; the King, conceiving it dangerous, as well as useless, to protract the contest, sent his Commands to the Duke of Portland and Lord North, to wait upon him at St. James's. I have been assured that at the Audience which took place, His Majesty offered to concede every point in litigation, except

one; namely, that Lord Thurlow should not be deprived of the Great Seal. If that Nobleman, he said, were permitted to remain in Office, he would allow the new Ministers to dispose of all other Employments at their pleasure. But, no arguments could induce the *Coalition* to relax upon so essential an Article. Fox equally disliked and dreaded the Chancellor, whose intractability, when added to his influence over the Royal mind, in a place which rendered him the Director of his Sovereign's conscience; exposed the new Candidates for Office, to perpetual danger. They insisted peremptorily on putting the Great Seal into Commission. Their proposition being as firmly rejected by His Majesty, the Conference terminated without any progress or beneficial result.

19th March.] Just at this critical juncture died the Honourable Dr. Frederick Cornwallis, Archbishop of Canterbury; a man of amiable character, though not distinguished by eminent virtues or talents. The King, who well knew that the *Coalition*, or in other words, that Fox, had destined that great ecclesiastical Elevation, for Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, or for Hinchcliffe, Bishop of Peterborough; probably, for the former of them; and who was

also aware that if he wished to dispose of it, himself, he had not an hour to lose; immediately sent for Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester. That excellent Prelate, whose piety and learning rendered him one of the ornaments, as well as pillars of the Anglican Church, having waited on His Majesty, was informed by him, that the See of Canterbury had become vacant; and that, as he knew no person, in his opinion, more worthy to fill the Metropolitan Chair, he wished the Bishop to accept it. He added, that in the actual position of public affairs, when he might, everyday, be compelled to take new Ministers into his Councils, he hoped that the Bishop would interpose no unnecessary delay. But, Dr. Hurd, far from desiring a dignity so much sought after, besought the King to excuse him for declining it: stating, that neither his health, nor his frame of mind, were adequate to the extended duties of the Metropolitan See, though equal to fulfilling the more limited Functions of his own Diocese. His Majesty having, not without great reluctance, yielded to these reasons, then insisted that the Bishop should at least name the person, whom he conceived most proper to succeed Dr. Cornwallis. Hurd, without long hesitation, mentioned Dr. Louth, Bishop of London: and a messenger was instantly dis-

patched to find him, at his house in St. James's Square. The Bishop arriving in a very short time, had no sooner entered the Closet, than the King made him the same proposition which he had done to Hurd. Extraordinary as it may appear, he met from that Prelate with a similar refusal; and one not less sincere, as well as inflexible, than the former. In this unexpected predicament, the King addressing himself to them both, said, "My Lords, I will "not press either of you further: but, before "you leave this room, you must recommend "a proper successor to the deceased Arch-"bishop; and whomsoever you shall agree "to name, I will accept." The two Prelates having requested to be allowed a short time for consulting together, after a few minutes deliberation, without quitting the royal presence, united in nominating Dr. John Moore, Bishop of Bangor. Being sent for to St. James's, on his arrival, to his no small astonishment, he learned the reasons for which he had been summoned to Court. He accepted the preferment; but, the requisite forms incident to the Congé d'elire, and other ceremonies indispensable to the Election, prevented the Translation from being completed, before the second of the following Month; the very day on which the King having surrendered at discretion, the

Coalition actually took possession of the Government.

Dr. Moore, whom we have beheld during two and twenty years Archbishop of Canterbury, and who owed his elevation to that high dignity, to the joint recommendations of Hurd and Louth; was a Prelate of an irreproachable life, added to a solid understanding. But, his first advance in the ecclesiastical profession, arose from one of those accidents, which, whatever Juvenal may have said to the contrary, sometimes seem to determine, no less than merit, the color of our fate. The Duchess Dowager of Marlborough, after the late Duke's decease in 1758, having occasion for a tutor to superintend the education of her youngest son, the present Lord Robert Spencer; applied to the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, requesting him to recommend a proper person to her for the purpose. I have been assured, that Mr. Moore, then a Servitor of that College, of very obscure birth and connections; happening to cross the Quadrangle, at the precise moment of this application; it immediately occurred to the Dean's mind, that he would answer the description of the tutor demanded by the Duchess. He hesitated nevertheless for some time, whether he should

make the proposition to Mr. Moore; her Grace having positively insisted on his stipulating, that whatever individual she should receive into her family, in quality of Preceptor to her son, should not be admitted to have the honor of dining at her table. The offer, when made by the Dean, was however accepted under that exclusion: but, so rapid became Mr. Moore's progress in her personal esteem, no less than in her affection, that within a very short time she found herself unable to dine without him. Her preference assumed even so decided a character, as to leave him no room to doubt of her inclination, if he had encouraged it, notwithstanding the prodigious disparity of their respective situations in life; to have bestowed her hand on him in marriage. Instead of thus acting, as a meaner man would have done, his sense of honor and delicacy of sentiment led him to communicate the advances made him by the Duchess, to her son the present Duke. A conduct so highly disinterested, and principles so elevated, could not fail ultimately to meet their just reward. By the Duke of Marlborough's interest, being promoted in the Church, he was in progress of time made Dean of Canterbury; from which situation he soon became Bishop of Bangor: passing through no other interme-

diate Episcopal stage, 'till he attained to the Metropolitan dignity. Such an impression indeed had his merit and character produced, while he remained at Canterbury, that on his promotion to the See of Bangor, all those persons who came to take leave of him, expressed their full conviction of his returning to them again as Archbishop. "We console "ourselves, Mr. Dean," said they "for losing "you at present, by the confident expectation "which we entertain of your speedy restora-"tion to us." I return to the course of public affairs.

On the complete failure of the first attempt already mentioned, which His Majesty made to form a new Administration; many propositions were suggested to prop and renovate the still existing Ministry, however difficult such a work might justly be esteemed under the actual circumstances. Mr. Pitt, desirous to meet the King's wishes on a point which coincided with all his own objects of personal elevation and ambition, suffered himself to be persuaded to promise that he would accept the post of First Lord of the Treasury, in addition to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and during twenty-four hours, he might be said to have in some measure

actually held both those offices. But, at the end of that short time, finding it impracticable, after full examination, to set up any Government which promised duration, or which could make head against the "Coalition" in the House of Commons, he reluctantly retracted his engagement. Reduced almost to despair by so many disappointments, and unable to effect his emancipation, the King unquestionably meditated the extraordinary project of visiting his Electoral dominions, and relinquishing for a time to the "Coalition," the power of which they had forcibly possessed themselves. But, on communicating his intentions to the Chancellor, that Minister, far from encouraging the proposition, gave it his strongest disapprobation. "There is nothing "easier, Sir," said he, with his characteristic severity of voice and manner, "than to go "over to Hanover. It may not however prove "so easy to return from thence to this country, when your Majesty becomes tired of "Germany. Recollect the precedent of "James the Second, who precipitately embraced a similar expedient. Your Majesty "must not think for a moment, of adopting "so imprudent and hazardous a step. Time "and patience will open a remedy to the pre-

"sent evils." The King, happily for himself, acquiesced in Lord Thurlow's wise and wholesome advice.

24th March.] While these interesting scenes passed at St. James's, the House of Commons, completely in the hands of the "Coalition," proceeded, though with great caution and external testimonies of respect, to press the Sovereign by every constitutional means, that he would put an end to the Interregnum, which Fox denominated "the most insolent domination that "ever disgraced a free country." On the Motion of Mr. Coke, an Address to that purpose being voted, was carried up to the foot of the Throne: but the King, neither terrified nor shaken, replied to it in general and vague, though in gracious terms. The debate which took place in consequence of Mr. Coke's Motion was attended with a curious and interesting circumstance. Irritated by the delays and impediments to their attainment of Power, the "Coalition," affecting to consider them as caused by the operation of secret influence on the Royal mind, and clearly applying the imputation itself to Jenkinson; that gentleman, who was present on the occasion, repelled the

charge, so often preferred against him in the course of the present Reign, with the most decided and peremptory denial of the fact. He candidly admitted indeed, that he had seen His Majesty repeatedly in the course of the preceding month: but he justified the act, as, in his quality of a Privy Councillor, he was bound to obey the summons of his Sovereign, and to repair to St. James's, whenever officially required. The idea of secret influence he reprobated, as only a bait for the multitude, invented to delude the Nation, and brought forward on the present occasion, merely to serve political purposes. Having exculpated himself, he conjured Lord North, though now allied with Fox, to state as a man of honour and veracity, whether during his Administration of many years, when they acted together, his Lordship had ever found or felt such a pretended influence lurking behind the Throne. Jenkinson added, that so implicit a reliance had he on Lord North's principles of honour, as willingly to abide the issue of his declaration respecting the point. Thus called on, that Nobleman rose, and in terms the most explicit, confirmed all that Jenkinson had asserted; disdaining to swell the popular cry, and protesting that he never had experienced

any concealed agency or interposition between himself and the Sovereign, while he had presided in the Councils of the Crown. It was not possible for a declaration to be less equivocal, or better calculated to undeceive the believers in secret influence: but, the opinion had taken too deep a hold of the public mind, and was sustained with too much art, to be eradicated even by such concurring testimonies.

No impression having apparently been made by the Address, and His Majesty remaining inflexible, Lord Surrey spoke out in stronger language: while Lord North, on the other hand, preserving more deference for the royal feelings, deprecated any harsh measures, and advised to wait with patience for the King's pleasure. Fox, however, less delicate, did not hesitate to accuse Lord Thurlow, if not by name, yet by description, as the cause of so culpable a suspension of all Government; stigmatizing him with the severest epithets, as the grand adviser of the Crown in the other House. Lord Surrey, whose manner, person, and character, seemed all well fitted to so rough a task, rising again in his place, proposed more affirmative steps, in order to com-

pel the King to listen to the wishes of the Commons, by forming immediately a new Administration. He nevertheless consented to postpone them, on receiving Mr. Pitt's information and assurance, given from the Treasury Bench, that he had resigned his Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. This Event, which took place on the last day of March, terminated the struggle; and forty eight hours afterwards, His Majesty finding it vain to protract his resistance, surrendered at discretion, by sending a second time for the Duke of Portland.

2d April.] If we consider, by the abstract principles of the British Constitution, as recognized at the Revolution of 1688, which compels the Sovereign to listen to the voice of the Majority of the House of Commons; the Conduct of George the Third, in resisting, for near six weeks, their votes, and their addresses: —if we reflect moreover, that the consequence of his pertinacity, produced a suspension of many of the essential and vital functions of the executive Government; at a moment too, when the exertions of a vigorous Administration were peculiarly demanded, in order to reduce various of the military and naval

establishments, to the Standard of Peace: — if we try his actions by these Criterions, we may be tempted to accuse him of sacrificing national objects, to the gratification of his private resentments or prejudices. But theory and practice are often found to be so much at variance, that it becomes unsafe to reason always from the former, however solid may appear the foundations. It is certain, that though the country anxiously desired to see an efficient government established, and deeply lamented the want of it for so long a time; yet, the King by no means suffered in the estimation of his people at large, on account of the desperate contest that he had maintained against the "Coalition." The nation in general regarded the union formed between Lord North and Fox, as a mutual sacrifice of moral and political principle, to ambition, or rather, to the love of Office. In vain did those leaders endeavour to justify it, by recurring to past periods of our History, when similar Coalitions were said to have been made between contending Factions. The interval of eleven months, which had scarcely elapsed since Fox and Burke were accustomed, day by day, to denounce their new Ally, as the most incapable and wicked of Ministers, appeared too short;

and the transition from enmity to friendship, seemed too sudden, to admit of being easily or satisfactorily explained to vulgar comprehension. His Majesty's principles, however mistaken they might be, were admitted to be upright, and intentionally directed always to the felicity of his Subjects. America, which had so long formed the object of contest, being lost; with the termination of the war, terminated likewise the King's unpopularity, which had principally originated from that source: while on the other hand, Fox, who during several years had stood so high in the estimation of the people, as a Patriot; now in his turn attracted severe observations on his recent junction with a Minister, the Author, as he asserted, of all the misfortunes which he had eloquently depictured, and which were deplored throughout the country. These sentiments and opinions, which began already to operate, and which only required time to mature, protected the King against any effects of popular disapprobation. But, they could not prevent, or longer protract his surrender to the combined leaders, who now compelled him to receive them into his counsels, without further delay.

In the Audience that he gave the Duke of Portland, for the purpose of forming a new Administration, he did not affect to conceal, or even to disguise, the emotions by which he was agitated on the occasion. He observed to that Nobleman, that the ministerial Arrangement to which he now submitted, being altogether compulsory, the new Ministers might dispose of the Cabinet places and other offices, as they should think proper: that he would not oppose, or refuse his signature to any Act presented to him officially for his sanction; but that the responsibility of advising such measures, must wholly rest with them. And he added, that he would not create any new British Peers, at their recommendation; a circumstance, of which he gave them distinct and early notification. The "Coalition" having acquiesced, at least tacitly, in these principles of the King's Conduct, took possession of the Government; the Duke of Portland being placed at the head of the Treasury; and Lord John Cavendish a second time becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer. Fox returned to the Foreign Office, as was naturally to be expected; leaving to Lord North, the Secretaryship of State for the Home Department. Lord Keppel, who

disapproving of the Conditions of the late Peace, had resigned the post of First Lord of the Admiralty, immediately after its conclusion, in which high employment he had been replaced by Lord Howe; was reinstated in his antient functions: while Lord Stormont became President of the Council. I have been assured that the Nobleman last mentioned, did not accept that situation, till he had clearly understood, as he conceived, the King's pleasure upon the subject; who not only approved, but wished him to take the Office, as it would exclude an enemy from occupying so important a place. Yet it is difficult to reconcile this asserted permission and approbation, with the resentment that His Majesty is known to have subsequently expressed, at Lord Stormont's thus actively joining the *Coalition.* The Privy Seal was lastly given to the Earl of Carlisle.

" By this new Ministerial arrangement, the Cabinet, which under Lord North had consisted of *nine* individuals; and which, under the two succeeding Administrations, was augmented to *eleven;* became reduced to *seven* persons. At first inspection, there seemed however to be something like an equal distri-

bution of power between the two leaders and parties who had recently coalesced; the Rockingham party reckoning *four*, and their new Allies counting *three* Votes. But, on closer examination, the fallacy became palpable, and it was evident that Fox in reality possessed the whole authority of Government. Not only he commanded a numerical majority: he likewise held the Treasury under his complete influence. Nor was this the single circumstance, that gave him a preponderating weight in every measure or deliberation. The energy and activity of his talents, when contrasted with the flexibility and indolence of Lord North, doubled his personal, as well as political consequence. His three friends in the Cabinet, were moreover incapable, if they had even been desirous, of setting limits to his ambition, or of restraining his ascendancy. To Fox, the Duke of Portland might indeed be said to owe his elevation to the post of First Lord of the Treasury; an eminence to which his own very moderate abilities could not of themselves, have conducted him. In like manner, Lord Keppel stood indebted for both his place and his Peerage, principally to Fox. Lord John Cavendish, from his great family connexions, and recognized integrity of cha-

racter, might be esteemed indeed an honor and an ornament to any Ministry: but, though independant in mind and in fortune, yet he appeared to be not the less under Fox's intellectual dominion, who on all occasions propelled and guided him, in, and out of Parliament. Lord North likewise by no means possessed, or exerted the same influence over his two Cabinet adherents, as Fox maintained among his Co-adjutors: Lord Stormont in particular, might be considered as wholly independant of Lord North's controul. Nor did the Offices of President, and of Privy Seal, in themselves confer the same active rights of Ministerial interference, as the Treasury, the Exchequer, and the Admiralty; all which Departments lay in Fox's partition of Employments. These circumstances are not unessential, when we speculate on the state of things under the Duumvirs; and may partly explain the causes, from which arose some of the most affirmative measures, subsequently adopted by the "Coalition."

If Fox, however, took effectual care to secure the real power of the State in his own hands, he in return allowed Lord North to bestow many of the great ostensible Offices

about the Court, among his immediate friends. The Earl of Dartmouth, instead of Privy Seal, as he had formerly been, was made Lord Steward: while the Earl of Hertford appeared again in the Drawing Room, re-invested with his white Wand of Lord Chamberlain. Lord Townsend, restored to his antient employment, replaced the Duke of Richmond at the head of the Ordnance. He was a Nobleman of very considerable ability, but, of great eccentricity of manners and character. Cheerful in his disposition, affable, facetious, and endowed with uncommon powers of conversation, he was formed to acquire popularity. He eminently possessed the dangerous talent of drawing Caricatures, which faculty he did not always restrain within the limits of severe prudence, though he no more spared himself, than he did others. In Ireland, while administering the affairs of that kingdom during five years, he gave general satisfaction; and I remember Courtney eulogizing him in the House of Commons, as Lord Lieutenant, in the language of Horace to Augustus.

> "Longas, o utinam, Dux bone, Ferias
> Prœstes *Hiberniæ*; dicimus integro
> Sicci manè die, dicimus uvidi,
> Quum Sol oceano subest."

Indeed, not one of the Viceroys sent over to Dublin in the course of twelve years, between 1772 and 1784, could compete with Lord Townsend in the affection of the Irish. Lord Harcourt was too grave and measured in his manners; the Earl of Buckinghamshire had too cold, stiff, and lofty a deportment; Lord Carlisle was too fine a Gentleman, and too highly bred; the Duke of Portland and Earl Temple, both, either from disinclination or from physical inability, observed too rigorously the virtues of temperance and abstemiousness; virtues by no means congenial to the soil: — lastly Lord Northington was too infirm in his health, to acquire general attachment in a country, where no virtues, however eminent, could recommend to national approtion, unless accompanied by personal sacrifices of various kinds. The Duke of Rutland, whom Pitt sent over to the Sister Kingdom, early in 1784; by the magnificence of his establishment, the conviviality of his temper, and the excesses of his table, obliterated or superseded Lord Townsend in their regard; but he paid for the triumph with his life, falling a victim in the vigor of his age, within four years, to his irregularities.

Mr. Charles Townsend, commonly called "Spanish Charles," whom Pitt created with nine other individuals, a Peer in 1797, by the title of Lord Bayning, was made Treasurer of the Navy. Wallace became once more Attorney General. Lord Sandwich, instead of presiding over the Admiralty, and directing that great Department of State, dwindled into Ranger of the two Parks: but as some compensation for this official degradation, his son Lord Hinchingbrook, a Nobleman deservedly acceptable to His Majesty, as well as one of the most honest, loyal, frank, and friendly men in the kingdom, was made Master of the Buck Hounds. Sir Grey Cooper, who had been one of the joint Secretaries of the Treasury, obtained a seat at the Board. Not that Fox appeared by any means oblivious of his friends; a fault which never could be imputed to him. Burke went back with great alacrity to the Pay Office; as did his brother Richard Burke, to the joint Secretaryship of the Treasury. Mr. Frederick Montague resumed his place at that Board: while the Earl of Surrey, whose recent services and prominent merit in Parliament, could not be passed over without remuneration, filled the remaining vacancy. Considerably more than two

Centuries had elapsed, since the gallant and distinguished Earl of that name, so well known under Henry the Eighth, the last who bore the Title, had occupied a situation in the Councils of the Crown.

Colonel Fitzpatrick was made Secretary at War; and though his talents always appeared to me, to be of a description more elegant than solid; more adapted to entertain, than fitted for the Desk, or for the Cabinet; yet I have been assured, even by those who were not partial to him among his own Profession, that he gave great, as well as general satisfaction, while he held that Employment. His person, tall, manly, and extremely distinguished; set off by his manners, which, though lofty and assuming, were nevertheless elegant and prepossessing; — these endowments added grace to the attractions of his conversation. No man's society was more eagerly courted among the highest Orders, by persons of both sexes. He possessed no mean poetic talents, peculiarly for compositions of wit, fancy, and Satire, in all which he far exceeded Fox. They had been brought up together from early life, remained inseparable to the last, and were strongly attached to each other. Fitzpa-

trick, like his friend, was a constant votary of Brookes's Club, and became during many years, a victim to play; but he possessed one advantage over Fox, namely the support arising from a Profession. As a Member of the House of Commons, he obtained no distinction for eloquence; though he never betrayed, when addressing Parliament, any want of ideas, language, or ability. Under Charles the Second, he would have been more in his element and in his place, than under such a Prince as George the Third; of whose Court he must nevertheless always be considered to have formed a Constellation and an ornament. In the "*Memoires de Grammont*" he would assuredly have filled a very distinguished nitch. I witnessed the painful spectacle of his surviving almost all the personal and intellectual graces, which nature had conferred on him with so lavish a hand. During the last twelve or eighteen months of his life, it might be said of Fitzpatrick, as the King of Prussia observes of Prince Eugene in the Trenches before Philipsburgh in 1734, "*Ce n'étoit que l'ombre* "*du grand Eugene.*" His mind and body, perhaps impaired by excesses, had equally fallen into a state of premature decay.

Sheridan became the other Secretary of the Treasury, and Lee was replaced in his former situation of Solicitor General. For the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, the Earl of Northington was selected by Fox. His person, unwieldy, vaccillating, and destitute of grace, seemed to disqualify him for any active exertions of body; nor were his faculties brilliant: but I have always heard that he gave great satisfaction, and was as much beloved, as his infirmities permitted, during the period of his short residence in that kingdom. The embassy to Paris, Fox destined for the Duke of Manchester. His figure, noble; his manners, affable and corresponding with his high rank, prepossessed in his favor: but his fortune bore no proportion to his dignity. Though a man of very dissipated habits, and unaccustomed to diplomatic business, he did not want talents. Such were the leading Arrangements made by the "Coalition," on their coming into power. The Great Seal, which no expostulations on the part of the King, could induce them to leave in Thurlow's hands, and which Wedderburn wisely declined accepting under the circumstances of the time, was put into commission; Lord Loughborough

being placed at its head. He constituted a valuable acquisition to the new Ministry in the House of Peers.

Lord North, it must be reluctantly confessed, however circumstances may justify his union with Fox, on principles of policy, of personal safety, or of necessity; did not perform in this great Drama, the most dignified part. After having occupied the post of First Minister, at the head of both the Treasury and the Exchequer, for twelve Sessions, it seemed to ordinary observers, no little degradation, at more than fifty years of age, to accept the Secretaryship of State for the Home Department, and to take his seat as such, on the Treasury Bench where he had so long presided, now squeezed between Fox and Burke. I own, that I never contemplated him in that situation, without reflexions allied to pity. It is true that we have since seen, and now actually behold, an Ex-first Minister placed in the same Department, after having presided at the helm during more than three years. But it would be invidious, and it is unnecessary, to draw any comparison between the two individuals. Neither their descent, the period of their respective Administrations,

nor even, according to my estimate, their abilities, can be considered as having any similarity, and still less any parity. Mr. Addington was moreover removed from the immediate scene of his fall in 1804 and translated to the upper House of Parliament: while Lord North remaining a Commoner, with the insignia of the Garter across his breast, exhibited a spectacle of ministerial greatness in Eclipse, like Wolsey, or like Clarendon, or like Bolingbroke. Even the compliments and the caresses of his late bitter opponents, now become his co-adjutors, always appeared to me, only to sink him in the estimation of the House. But he seemed, himself, to be wholly exempt from, or superior to, any painful emotions at the political change that he had undergone. The same cheerful complacency, ready wit, and unaffected good humour, always characterised him under every circumstance. Sometimes he even jested on his own descent from the highest situation, to a subordinate place in Government. The Apartments constituting the Secretary of State's Office at the Treasury, being situate on the second floor, he experienced some fatigue in ascending so many steps; and I recollect his once complaining, when out of breath, of the length of

the staircase. Frequently, from the effect of long habit, or from absence of mind, forgetting the change in his official situation, he went strait to the Treasury Chambers on the first floor. Such was the oblivious felicity and equality of his temper, that these accidents, which would have distressed more irritable men, never externally discomposed him. His eldest son, Colonel North, who had so actively exerted himself to effect the "Coalition," was made one of the two Under Secretaries in his father's Office.

April.] It is unquestionable that there existed a desire, if not an intention, on the part of the new Administration, about this time, of calling up Lord North to the House of Peers. But, various reasons or impediments probably prevented its accomplishment. The King having expressly informed the Ministers, when they came into Office, that he would not create any English Peer, at their recommendation, or request; it was not likely that he would violate his resolution, in order to elevate Lord North to that dignity; against whom, as may be supposed, he felt highly offended, or rather indignant, for his union with Fox. Lord North himself, how-

ever well he supported appearances to the world, yet probably would not have disliked, after the recent events, to have quitted a scene such as the House of Commons, where he made an inglorious figure, and where recollections very humiliating must continually intrude on his mind. Fox on the other hand, could not possibly be averse to such a removal, as he wanted no co-adjutor to aid him on the Treasury Bench; while Lord North's retreat would have left him sole Minister, as well as manager, of the lower House of Parliament. But, for that very reason, Lord North ought to have felt himself in some measure compelled to remain a Commoner. His party, already shaken and diminished, he well knew, would have soon crumbled away, when they no longer beheld, nor could have had daily access to their leader. Neither would he have attracted the same consideration in the other House, as he excited in his actual situation. Pressed between the amity of Fox, and the hostility of Pitt, with the loss of America about his neck, he saw himself obliged, after having so long performed the first figure, to become only the third personage in the State.

The public business of every kind, which had been nearly two Months delayed by the extraordinary occurrences that we have contemplated, at length began in Parliament. The new Chancellor of the Exchequer opened his financial Administration with a Loan; the terms of which, if not as beneficial or advantageous to the Country as might have been wished, were nevertheless, he said, as good as could be procured under the circumstances of urgency and retardment, in which the culpable obstinacy of the late Ministers had involved every Department. Mr. Pitt, who had now taken his place on the Opposition Bench, and who from this time, notwithstanding his youth, was justly considered as the head of that party in the House of Commons; opposed and censured the terms of Lord John Cavendish's Loan; but without venturing to divide the House upon it, as the "Coalition," he was aware, would have much outnumbered him. Nor did he prove more successful in an attempt which he soon afterwards renewed, to effect a Parliamentary Reform, than he had been in the former Session. He pronounced indeed, a most eloquent address upon the subject, and was supported in his Motion, by Fox. Two Proselytes likewise, Mr. Thomas Pitt,

and Mr. Dundas, having read, each their political recantation, adopted his principles for rendering the Representation more extended, as well as more pure and incorrupt. But, the House remained deaf to all these arguments, though illustrated by examples; the latter of which did not even appear to have obtained for those who exhibited them, the praise either of disinterestedness, or of sincerity. Fox and Sheridan, while they sustained Pitt's proposition, yet treated with contempt and derision, the pretended sacrifice of the Borough of Old Sarum, which Mr. Thomas Pitt affected to offer up at the shrine of the British Constitution, as a victim to its renovated purity. If we reflect on the close degree of consanguinity that existed between William and Thomas Pitt, who were Cousins-german; a relationship strengthened by personal friendship:—and if we likewise recollect that Thomas represented the elder Branch of the family; we may perhaps incline to think that he relied on being speedily raised to the Peerage, for this mark of devotion, as effectively took place scarcely eight months afterwards. Dundas, who had a long and a keen political sight, having already determined on attaching his future political fortune to Pitt,

probably thought a speculative political Tenet, undeserving of contention. But, the recantation pronounced by both, rather tended to throw a ridicule on the proposition, than to recommend it to the House. Lord North made ample amends for his passive inactivity during the preceding Session, when a similar discussion took place. He spoke with uncommon ability, wit, and force of argument, against all representative innovation. Powis, who rarely coincided with him on any point, joined him on this occasion. Mr. Pitt's Resolutions were finally negatived by a far greater majority than in the preceding year; out of near four hundred and fifty Members who voted, only one hundred and forty-nine, having divided with him.

May.] No man in Office made a more conspicuous figure, or attracted more attention, during the Session under consideration, than Burke: but it was not by any means such as his friends and admirers could in all respects contemplate either with pride, with pleasure, or with approbation. It excited indeed great regret, that a person endowed with parts so eminent, and animated by Philanthropy so extended, should nevertheless allow himself at

times, to be led into the most unjustifiable deviations from ordinary prudence and propriety of conduct. In the present instance he involved his party, as well as himself, in equal embarrassment, by his intemperate precipitation. Two individuals, Powell and Bembridge, the one, Cashier, the other, Accountant, of the Military Pay Office, having been accused of malversation in the discharge of their functions, had been dismissed by Colonel Barré from their Offices, while he was Paymaster of the Forces, under Lord Shelburne's Administration. On Burke coming again into that Employment, one of his first acts, without previously consulting Fox upon the subject, was to reinstate both those persons in their respective situations. Such a proceeding relative to Functionaries laboring under heavy charges, and about to become subjects of criminal prosecution in the Court of King's Bench, naturally formed an object of discussion in the House of Commons, where it excited very pointed animadversion. Burke, petulant and irritable, defended with warmth the step that he had taken, though a measure in itself evidently contrary to the judgment of all parties. Fox, while he tacitly lamented and disapproved the Act, yet as he never abandoned his friends in

distress, endeavoured to justify its author. The interference was nevertheless, peculiarly painful and delicate on his part; Powell, who had risen under his father, the late Lord Holland, being supposed to have connived at some of the appropriations of public money, committed, by that Nobleman, while Paymaster of the Forces; or of which appropriations at least, he stood loudly accused by popular prejudice. It was for the corrupt concealment of a sum exceeding forty eight thousand Pounds in the Accounts of Lord Holland, that Powell and Bembridge were now about to undergo a trial. No circumstance therefore could have been less agreeable to Fox, while standing in the conspicuous situation of Secretary of State, than to be thus compelled by Burke's imprudence in restoring them to their places, to come forward as the Advocate and Apologist of such a transaction.

The House of Commons, however much they shewed on every occasion, a disposition to approve and to sanction the general measures of Administration; manifested nevertheless strong disapprobation of Burke's conduct in this instance, by compelling him to accept the Resignation of Bembridge. Powell.

overcome either by the weight of his own reflections, or by his inability to sustain the public opinion of his culpability; after losing in a great measure the use of his faculties, put an end to his existence with a razor. Bembridge, of a firmer mind, or stronger nerves, was reserved for the infamy of a public trial and condemnation, before Lord Mansfield. The prosecution, reluctantly, but ably and fairly conducted by Lee, the Solicitor General, terminated in the complete exposure of the fraud imputed to Bembridge, for which the Court sentenced him to a severe fine and imprisonment. Every exertion which the purity of our Jurisprudence will allow, was made to soften, or to avert, the Severity of the stroke. Burke, who did not hesitate to appear in Court, seated upon the Bench, during the proceedings, gave the strongest attestations to Bembridge's character for integrity. He was accompanied there by Lord North, who likewise condescended to join in a similar testimony to the good conduct and probity of the accused, during the time that he had, himself, formerly held the Post of joint Paymaster of the Forces. But, these efforts, which proved unavailing, only attracted censure towards the persons who thus attempted to screen from punishment, a conspicuous

delinquent: while the proofs exhibited of his guilt, impressed the public mind with opinions highly unfavorable, not merely to Burke himself, at least in a prudential point of view; but to the Ministry in which he filled so distinguished a place.

3d June.] Scarcely had this affair ceased to occupy attention, when Burke plunged himself into a second embarrassment, hardly less painful to his friends. A Bill for the regulation of the Pay Office, having been brought into the House of Commons by himself, which gave rise to much discussion and difference of opinion, in its passage through the Committee; the contending parties agreed to fill up the Blanks amicably, after the House rose, round the Speaker's Chair. Burke being Paymaster General, of course took an active part, as did many other Members; and the Clauses were understood to have been settled in the way specified, by mutual consent. But, Mr. Estwick, Member for Westbury, on a Motion for the third reading of the Bill, to the astonishment of the House, rising up in his place, preferred a formal charge against Burke; accusing him of having gone into the engrossing room, after the Bill in question had been carried there; of expunging three Clauses,

and altering a fourth, which he re-modelled to his own taste. Such an act, if it had been proved, might have led to very grave consequences; and must in any case have attracted public censure, or produced a reprimand from the Chair. Fox immediately came forward with his characteristic manliness, to the aid of his friend, whose conduct was severely arraigned by Pitt. The House admitted the Secretary's justification, and did not inflict any mark of its disapprobation on Burke; though the excuses offered, or reasons alledged, for his Conduct, were by no means such as completely exculpated him in the opinions of impartial men. It appeared however by the testimony of Cornwall the Speaker, that Burke had not, as he was accused of doing, either expunged or altered any Clause in the engrossing Office. The Speaker at least asserted, and the House lent credit to his assurance, that the misconception had arisen from the circumstance of his having put the Question on the four Clauses, in so low a tone of voice, that they all passed without notice. Pitt contended that even though this extraordinary fact were true, yet the expunged Clauses must be restored, and debated anew by the House. As the proposition could not be refused, they

were therefore brought up, and negatived without a Division. The Speaker's testimony extricated Burke, and Fox manifested the generous ardor of his mind throughout the whole transaction; an ardor which always impelled him to cover the errors of those with whom he was connected in politics or friendship. But, he did not the less in private condemn Burke's imprudence; and he was said to have warned the Paymaster of the Forces, as he valued his Office, not to involve his friends, and the Administration of which he composed so conspicuous a Member, in a third similar Dilemma, during the remainder of the Session.

Among the persons of Eminence who have "strutted their hour," under the reign of George the Third, and who about this time disappeared from the great public Theatre, may be named General Sir John Irwin. His person, manners, and conversation, were all made for the Drawing Room, where he seemed always to be in his native element. Though declining in life, yet his figure, tall, graceful, and dignified, set off by all the ornaments of Dress, accompanied with a Riband and a Star, rendered him conspicuous in every company. He al-

ways reminded me of a Marshal of France, such as they are described by St. Simon, under Louis the Fourteenth. His politeness, though somewhat formal, was nevertheless natural and captivating. Perhaps, at least so his enemies asserted, his military talents were not equally brilliant with his personal accomplishments; but he had not risen the more slowly on that account, to the honors, or to the eminences of his profession. Besides a Regiment and a Government conferred on him by the Crown, he had held during several years, the post of Commander in Chief in Ireland, with very ample appointments and advantages. But, no income, however large, could suffice for his expences, which being never restrained within any reasonable limits, finally involved him in irretrievable difficulties. The fact will hardly obtain belief, that at one of the entertainments which he gave to the Lord Lieutenant in the year 1781, at Dublin, he displayed on the table, as the principal piece in the Desert, a representation of the Fortress of Gibraltar invested by the Spanish forces, executed in Confectionary. It exhibited a faithful view of that celebrated Rock, together with the works, Batteries, and Artillery of the besiegers, which threw sugar

plumbs against the walls. The expence of this ostentatious piece of magnificence, did not fall short of fifteen hundred Pounds; and so incredible must the circumstance appear, that if I had not received the assurance of it from Lord Sackville, I should not venture to report it in these Memoirs.

The greatest intimacy subsisted between that Nobleman and Sir John, who owed much of his advancement and success in life, to the protection of Lionel, Duke of Dorset. Lord Sackville's disinterested friendship still continued to bring him into Parliament, as his Colleague for East Grinstead, after Irwin's return from Ireland, on the dissolution of Lord North's Administration, down to his final departure from England. Decorated with the Order of the *Bath*, which then conferred much distinction, and of which he never failed to display the insignia whenever he went to the House, his personal appearance was imposing. Even of a morning, in his greatest undress, he wore a small Star embroidered on his frock, without which he rarely appeared any where; and his travelling Hussar Cloaks bore the same brilliant badge of Knighthood. No man better knew the

value of external figure, aided by manner; and Philip, Earl of Chesterfield himself, had not more successfully studied the Graces. It was impossible to possess finer manners, without any affectation; or more perfect good breeding. With such pretensions of person and of address, it cannot surprize that he attained to a great degree of favor at St. James's. The King considered and treated Irwin, as a person whose conversation afforded him peculiar gratification. He often delighted to protract the discourse with a Courtier, whose powers of entertainment, however extensive, were always under the restraint of profound respect; and who never forgot the character of the Prince whom he addressed, even for a single moment. Irwin, though so fine a gentleman, loved all the indulgencies of conviviality, in which gratifications he never restrained himself. The King, not unacquainted with these particulars, having said to him one day, at the Drawing Room, when conversing on his common mode of life, "they tell "me, Sir John, that you love a glass of "wine;" "Those, Sir, who have so re"ported of me to Your Majesty," answered he, bowing profoundly, "have done me great "injustice. They should have said a Bottle."

Sir John Irwin's first wife, a daughter of the celebrated Physician Sir Edward Barry, who wrote with so much elegance and information on the "Wines of the Ancients;" brought him no issue: but he afterwards contracted a more obscure matrimonial connexion. On his return to England, his debts became so numerous, and his creditors so importunate, that, though as a Member of Parliament, his person remained secure, he found it impossible to reside longer with comfort in this country. Quitting therefore privately his elegant house in Piccadilly, he retired to the Continent; and landing in France, he hired a Chateau in the Province of Normandy, where his military rank secured for him every testimony of respect from the surrounding gentry. He nevertheless soon experienced such pecuniary difficulties, that having no hope of ever revisiting his native country, he removed over the Alps into Italy. I believe he died at Padua, about the month of May, 1788, in great obscurity, though not in distress. The King, who sincerely regretted his departure from England, and who well knew the causes of it, often expressed his concern for Sir John Irwin's misfortunes; which he endeavoured to alleviate by sending Sir John, the sum of a thousand Pounds

from his Privy Purse, in two separate payments. I know this fact from the late Sir Charles Hotham; who was, I think, himself, the channel through which His Majesty transmitted the first donation of five hundred Pounds.

Lord John Cavendish, though he had negotiated and brought forward the *Loan*, soon after he entered on Office, yet did not propose the Taxes which were to pay the Interest of it, untill many weeks later in the Session. He at length laid them before the House of Commons, where, on the whole they appeared to meet with general approbation, and even attracted some Encomiums. But, Lord John, whose talents were not eminently adapted for the discussion of Measures of Finance, having stated his Ways and Means with tolerable precision, left the task of explaining and defending them, principally to his Associates in power. Fox and Lord North, who undertook it with great ability, repelled the comments made from the Opposition side of the House, on the new Taxes: while the Chancellor of the Exchequer, quitting his seat on the Treasury Bench, retired during a considerable part of the Debate, behind the Speaker's Chair; from which retreat he peeped

out on either side, as individuals rose for the purpose of approving, or of censuring his *Budget*. Lord John's acknowledged purity of character, when joined to his many virtues; not to dwell on his high Descent; rendered him universally respected: and the advantage which his Party derived from those qualities, in the public estimation, was incalculable. The Nation even seemed silently to demand some such Guarantee, when the interests of the Country were committed to a man of Fox's ruined Fortune, and dissipated habits of life. Mr. Pitt, it is true, who had been so recently placed at the head of the Exchequer, scarcely possessed more property than his rival. But the people of England knew how to discriminate between their respective deficiency. Pitt, though not more distinguished by habits of economy than Fox, yet had not dissipated his small paternal fortune in any ostensible vices: while Fox, besides a landed Estate, and a lucrative Office, both which he sold, had squandered an immense sum of ready money. Indeed, though Fox always appeared to me, whenever *Loans* or *Budgets* were discussed in Parliament, to display a capacity for arithmetical Calculation, and all the talents for a Minister of Finance,

scarcely, if at all inferior to Mr. Pitt's ability in that line; yet, I believe, it never occurred to any man's mind, to place Fox in the controul of the Treasury, or of the Exchequer, at any period of his life. Almost as well might Henry the Fifth have placed Falstaff there. Fox himself seemed not to emulate a higher post than Secretary of State, always interposing Lord John Cavendish in the guardianship of the public money. Nor could the British people confide their interests to more incorruptible integrity, than distinguished the Chancellor of the Exchequer: but he could not sustain the slightest comparison with Pitt, nor even with Lord North, in the powers of his mind and understanding, or in his parliamentary talents, and knowledge of business.

While the Rockingham Party, during many years had been excluded from Office, they loudly declaimed against Abuses of every description, particularly against the extravagant expenditure of the public money in various Departments. Nor, during the very short period that the Treasury was under their controul, which did not exceed three Months, can it be denied that they endeavoured to manifest the sincerity of their engagements.

Burke, who stood forward in the invidious character of a Reformer, acquired no inconsiderable merit with the Country at large, by his exertions to reduce exorbitant demands, or to abolish obsolete and overgrown Establishments of every kind. But, with Lord Rockingham's life, these efforts wholly ceased. From the period of their union with Lord North, when they began confidently to count on a quiet possession of power and emolument, at least for a few years, in consequence of their strength in both Houses of Parliament; they seemed to have greatly relaxed in the severity of their political principles. Above all they manifested a decided aversion to any Reforms which did not originate with themselves, and which were not subjected to their own Ministerial Controul. A striking exemplification of this fact, presented itself before the end of the Session.

Mr. Pitt, who watched all their conduct, and canvassed all their measures, with jealous, as well as unremitting attention; having brought forward a Bill, in order to establish regulations in the Fees, Perquisites, and other emoluments received in most of the public Offices; instead of finding any support from the other side of the House, as might natu-

rally have been expected, met with the warmest opposition in that quarter. Lord John Cavendish possessed indeed too much ingenuousness of character, altogether to dispute the utility of the objects proposed, and therefore contented himself with partially and indirectly resisting the plan: but Fox and Burke loaded the Bill, its author, and the Administration of which he had lately composed a part, with the severest Epithets or Imputations. Some of the comparisons and allusions made by Burke in particular, reflecting contemptuously on Pitt, as a Projector and a Reformer, appeared, when falling from *his* lips, to affect his Audience with no little surprize; he having so recently, himself, laid claim to general approbation, in the same character. As it might nevertheless have seemed too indecorous, not to permit the Bill to pass the House of Commons, Ministers allowed it to go up to the Peers: but, *there*, the whole force of government drew out in array against the Measure. Even the Duke of Portland, who seldom exhibited any specimens of Eloquence, stigmatized it as "more "a disease, than a remedy;" while Lord Fitzwilliam decried it, as being both trifling and vexatious in its Nature. Thus attacked, the measure was finally negatived. Such an aversion, demonstrated to the very objects of re-

trenchment, which they had themselves affected to introduce only a few Months before, with so much zeal, even into the Palace, and at the table of the Sovereign ; evidently, because they were now proposed from a hostile source; did not fail to make an adequate impression on the public mind. It operated to the disadvantage of the Ministry in every quarter of the Kingdom ; and by unmasking them in some measure, it silently prepared the way for those astonishing events in the interior of the Government, which took place before the conclusion of the year.

Some of the Abuses which Pitt had attempted to point out and expose, in the progress of the Bill which he introduced into the House of Commons, were indeed of a description so singular, as to excite not only astonishment, but even to produce a degree of ridicule. They served to shew what extensive depredations had been committed upon the public, in many, or in all the principal Offices, previous to the period of Lord North's resignation. That Nobleman formed the mark, at which Pitt levelled his severest censures; nor could the House altogether refrain from laughter, at one of the charges, specifying a sum of three hundred and forty

Pounds, paid to the Secretary of the Treasury, for the article of *Whipcord*. The annual expence of the first Minister for his individual *Stationary*, did not fall short, as it appeared, of thirteen hundred Pounds. Lord North, when called on, made nevertheless not only a plausible, but a very satisfactory defence, to most of the alledged Items. Relative to the consumption of Whipcord, which had excited a great deal of mirth, having professed however his total ignorance, Robinson undertook to give some sort of explanation, which however ingenious or even well founded, nevertheless diverted, more than it satisfied his hearers.

It is certain that during the period antecedent to 1782, the Abuses practised in many great official Departments, which exceeded all reasonable limits, loudly demanded parliamentary regulation. I have, myself, had occasion to hear, if not to see, specimens and instances of depredation; (for they well merited the name;) which will hardly obtain belief in the present days. I knew with some degree of intimacy, a Lord of Trade, who possessing a Borough, and a very large fortune, was himself a Member of the House of Commons in successive Parliaments. On his being sworn in at the Board of Trade, he

issued an order to provide a great number of pewter Inkstands for his own use; which he afterwards commuted into one composed of Silver. I have seen him at the Levee, dressed in a suit of green Velvet, fabricated, as fame reported, out of the materials ordered in his public character, for the ostensible purpose of making bags to contain Office papers. His friends and correspondents could recognize the Stationary, of which he had made an ample provision, more than ten years after the Board of Trade itself, abolished by Burke's Bill, had ceased to have any existence. Even *since* 1782, similar facts are said to have taken place. This Gentleman, or rather his wife, formed one on the List of British Peerages, intended to have been either revived or created, by Lord North and Fox; the number of which, as I recollect, amounted to thirty two, or thirty three; if the "Coalition" had forced their way a second time into the Cabinet, in the beginning of 1784, as they confidently expected.

Nor were these the only official and Ministerial appropriations of the Public Money, to private purposes, that distinguished the Times under our review. From the Ministry of Sir Robert Walpole, down to the conclusion of

Lord North's Government, few places of considerable emolument, in any Department, were given, wholly unfettered, to the nominal occupant. Even under Lord Rockingham's first Administration in 1765, we find Wilkes *quartered* on the whole of the Treasury and Admiralty Boards, to the annual amount of 1040l. a year; the Marquis paying him 500l.; the inferior Lords of the Treasury, 60l. each; and the Members of the Board of Trade, each 40l. This curious fact is stated in Horne's Letter to "Junius," of the 31st July, 1771." It was not attempted to be denied. When the Duke of Grafton, in June of the same year, 1771, accepted the Office of Privy Seal, which had been previously destined for Lord Weymouth; "Junius" more than insinuates, that the last mentioned Nobleman was *quartered* by the Duke upon Rigby, who, from 1768 to 1782, nominally occupied the sole Paymastership of the Forces. I knew a Lady of Quality, who having been daughter to a person high in Office, was commonly said to have *rode* sixteen persons at one time; to whom her father had given places, under that express condition or reservation. I believe she outlived them all. Governments, military Appointments, Offices in the Excise and Customs; in a word, places

of every description, at home and abroad, were frequently loaded with *Riders*. These practices were disdained by Mr. Pitt, when he became First Minister; but he was necessitated in many cases to commit a greater inroad on the Constitution, by distributing Honours and Dignities, as a substitute for emoluments.

July.] The fruitless attempt made by Pitt, to regulate the abuses of Fees in the public Offices, did not constitute the only unsuccessful parliamentary effort undertaken by him, during the Session. A short time before its close, Lord John Cavendish having, as it would appear, somewhat incautiously or inadvertently laid on the Table of the House, a List of public Accountants, from whom Balances of money exceeding in the whole forty-four Millions, were due to Government; Pitt endeavoured to induce the House to vote an Address to the Crown, requesting His Majesty to take measures for compelling the persons named, to account for the sums so remaining in their hands; and for preventing a future recurrence of the same Abuse. He seemed authorized to assume, that such a Motion would be too analogous to the avowed disposition and professions of the

Rockingham party, to experience from them any resistance. All the ability, eloquence, wit, and ingenuity of the Ministerial Benches, were nevertheless called out, in order to invalidate the authenticity of the very Document, laid by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Table; which his Colleagues now declared to be destitute of proper authority, and consequently, an unsafe, as well as inefficient basis, on which to found the proposed Address to the Throne. This treatment of Lord John in his official capacity, as Minister of Finance, by his own friends, in the face of the House of Commons, did not appear at first sight, either the most respectful to him, or even the most decorous to themselves. Sheridan, with consummate Address, contrived, however, to render it in some measure palatable, by a delicate mixture of compliment to his integrity, and of censure on his prudence: while Lord North and Fox played their whole Artillery upon Pitt. The two Secretaries of State seemed on that day, to act in perfect concert, and to be cordially united. Having thus extracted almost every Clause from the Address, which rendered it efficient or useful, they allowed it, when mutilated and harmless, to pass the House.

16th July.] The Session, protracted to the middle of July, now drew towards a termination. During the space of about three Months that Parliament remained sitting after the formation of the new Ministry, both Houses, in particular the Commons, had manifested the utmost disposition to give them every support. The Opposition, though conducted by Pitt and Dundas, while it was tacitly, as well as powerfully, sustained by Jenkinson; yet rarely ventured on a Division, which only exposed the paucity and inferiority of their numbers. Lord North, however obscured he might be by the superior energy of Fox, still remained the nominal leader of a very numerous body, who looked to him for protection against the violent Members of the Rockingham Party. But his Colleague, without the title, was already become the real First Minister; as the great Earl of Chatham had been formerly, under the late and present Reign, when only Secretary of State, or when holding the Privy Seal. The strength of Fox's character, the activity of his mind, the warmth of his friendship, and the splendor of his talents;—this combination of endowments naturally attracting adherents, enabled him to

absorb the whole power of Government. Burke, ardent, indefatigable, and never losing sight of his object, impatiently looked forward to the great task of reforming and remodelling India. The advanced season of the year at which the Administration came into power, and that circumstance only, had induced him, as well as his Colleagues, to allow the present Session to elapse, without immediately availing themselves of the patronage, and multiplied sources of advantage, which the Indian Empire offered to their avidity. It presented a rich harvest, which they devoured by anticipation; and the enjoyment of which they reluctantly postponed, even for a few Months. But, the magnitude, importance, and complicated nature of the political machine by which India was governed, demanded mature deliberation, before they ventured to reconstruct it, as they meditated, entirely on new principles. It was therefore finally determined in the Cabinet, to call Parliament together early in the approaching Autumn, for the purpose; and the King was expressly made to declare the Intention, in his Speech pronounced from the Throne on the Prorogation. Sheridan, by a wonderful combination of almost all talents which can meet in man, under the controul of unalterable equality of temper, began already to compete with

Burke in parliamentary estimation; and frequently obtained a more ready or patient hearing from the House. Every day, while it confirmed the ascendant which he had there acquired, placed him higher among the most distinguished supports of Administration.

If the *Coalition* looked round at home, they beheld at this period, a docile Parliament, originally called together by Lord North; and of which he still retained in his hands, many of the secret Springs or Keys, in both Houses. Abroad, every thing announced the continuance of Peace. America was indeed lost; but the emancipated Colonies had ceased to be hostile to Great Britain. France, exhausted even by her late advantages beyond the Atlantic, weak in her Government, and altogether convulsed or deranged in her Finances; already nourished in her vitals the seeds of that fatal Revolution, which since overturned order, religion, morals, and the antient fabrick of Europe. Joseph the Second, Emperor of Germany, suppressing Monasteries and religious Establishments with one hand; with the other, in direct violation of all subsisting Treaties, rashly and wantonly demolished to their foundations, the works of the Garrison cities of the Austrian Nether-

lands. I witnessed, myself, during the course of that Summer, the expulsion of the last remains of the Dutch troops maintained in the Barrier towns, and the destruction or demolition of the Fortifications themselves. Except Luxembourg, placed at one extremity; and the Citadel of Antwerp situate at the other, it was obvious that scarcely any obstacle remained to exclude France from overrunning the Low Countries at her pleasure. If these reflexions appeared however to cause no uneasiness to Ministers, yet, a domestic source of just anxiety which they could not surmount, presented itself in the fixed and unconquerable Alienation of the King. In vain did they endeavour to insinuate themselves into his favor. He received with formality and coldness, all their advances; allowed them to dictate measures; gave them Audiences, signed papers, and complied with their advice: but he neither admitted them to his confidence, nor ceased to consider them as objects of his personal aversion. The consciousness of this sentiment existing in the royal bosom, which sunk deep into Fox's mind, naturally impelled him to substitute other foundations, on which to construct, and to perpetuate, his ministerial Greatness.

No man who has enjoyed the opportunities of studying Fox's character, or of being informed respecting his political line of action, to which I have had access; can however doubt that he would have preferred gentleness before force, and conciliation in preference to harsher methods of confirming his power, if the means of accomplishing it had been open to him. He well knew how difficult it was to retain Office in defiance of the Sovereign; and he could not be ignorant that by his junction with Lord North, though he had stormed the Cabinet, he had lost his popularity. All his original principles were monarchical, and even his ambition partook of the pliability of his nature. His very necessities rendered him ductile, and loudly called on him to bestow some attention on his private fortune. In fact we may question whether a more complying Minister, or one more disposed to have gratified his Master in every legitimate object of royal desire, could have been found among His Majesty's Subjects. Mr. Pitt manifested by no means the same acquiescence, or the same suavity and ready submission, on a variety of occasions, when afterwards in Office. He was on the contrary, often intractable and pertinacious, even upon points painfully interesting to the King. But, if George the

Third did not regard him with affection, he at least considered him with esteem; and unfortunately for Fox, it was not easy to acquire the royal favour, except through the Channel of his moral approbation. "*Hoc fonte derivata Clades.*" It was in vain that the Secretary watched for a moment of weakness, of which he would no doubt have profited. There was no Mistress to facilitate his approaches, to soften asperities, and to form the medium of reconciliation. Under George the First, the Duchess of Kendal, or the Countess of Darlington, would have performed that office, though not gratuitously; as Mrs. Howard, or Madame de Walmoden, would equally have done with George the Second.

Nor can we reasonably question on the other hand, that His Majesty justly appreciated the Secretary's character, and was well aware that he would not prove more intractable or rigid while in Office, than other men. But he did not choose to avail himself of such assistance. I know that some three or four years after the time of which I now speak, the King finding himself alone with the Duke of Queensberry, who had been one of the Lords of his Bedchamber ever since his Accession to the

Crown, and with whom he was accustomed to converse unreservedly on many subjects; the discourse turned on the Coalition Ministry. " Sir," said the Duke, " Your Majesty might " safely have allowed Mr. Fox to remain in " Office, and you would have found in him " every disposition to comply with your " wishes. I can assert as an undoubted fact, " that there was scarcely any proof of his per- " sonal devotion, or any sacrifice that he " would not have made, to acquire your " favour." " He never said as much to " me," answered the King. " No, Sir," re- plied the Duke, " assuredly he did not, " because Your Majesty never gave him any " encouragement to venture on taking such a " step." George the Third, during the eight or nine months of his captivity, only looked to emancipation, and never attempted to gain his Ministerial Jailors.

Meanwhile emerging, as the Duties of his high Office compelled him, from the dissipation and society of Brookes's; Fox, during this brilliant, but transitory portion of his life, fulfilled with universal approbation, I might even say, admiration, all the essential, no less than the ostensible functions of Secretary of State. At his house in Grafton

Street, he received and entertained the foreign Ministers then resident in London from the various European Courts, with distinguished Eclat. They, who were never weary of his conversation, respected his talents, while they admired the immense variety of his information on all diplomatic points. Delighted at the facility with which he wrote or conversed in French, they were not less gratified by the liberal hospitality of his table, added to the amenity and frankness of his manners. Nor can it be sufficiently regretted, that a man so much formed to have done Honor, and to have rendered essential service to his Country, as Fox; should, by the errors or imprudencies of his own conduct, have rendered himself obnoxious to his Sovereign, and thus have excluded himself from Office. We cannot reflect without concern, that in the course of a life prolonged to its fifty-eighth year, Fox sat only about nineteen months in the Cabinet, taken all together: while Pitt, who terminated his comparatively short career at forty-seven, passed almost his whole life after he attained to manhood, in the first employments; or rather in the highest situation of State, that of Prime Minister. However we may dispute as to the superiority of *Talents* in these two extraordinary and illus-

trious men, posterity will be at no loss to decide respecting the superiority of their *Judgment.*

August.] Pitt availing himself of this Interval of Political Leisure, afforded him by the Triumph of the "Coalition," and the Recess of Parliament, endeavoured to catch a hasty glimpse of the Continent, which he had scarcely ever before visited. As if he foresaw that no other occasion would ever again present itself for the gratification of his curiosity, he crossed over to Calais, and directed his Course in the first instance, to the Low Countries. Mr. George Rose, who had been one of the two Secretaries of the Treasury, when Pitt filled the Post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and who has since deservedly risen by his financial talents or services, to much higher official situations, accompanied him. I met them by accident, at Antwerp. Pitt proceeding afterwards to Paris, was presented by our Embassador, the Duke of Manchester, to Louis the Sixteenth, at Fontainbleau, where the French Court always passed a considerable portion of the Autumn. His Name, and the fame of his distinguished abilities, which had preceded his appearance, disposed all to admire him; but the King, in compliance with the stupid Etiquette, that

interdicted him from speaking to Foreigners, when presented at Court; added to his natural shyness; did not, I believe, exchange one word with Pitt. The Queen, whose superior energy of mind emancipated her from such restraints, treated him with the utmost distinction. Marie Antoinette entered into conversation with him, as far as his cold manner, encreased by an imperfect knowledge of the French Language, would permit her to engage him in discourse. "*Monsieur*," said she to him, on his retiring, with a manner even more expressive than the words, "*Je suis charmeé de vous voir, et de vous avoir vue.*" Pitt took care to return to London from his short excursion, in time to attend the Meeting of Parliament.

While the two leaders of Ministry, and of Opposition, were thus respectively occupied, the one in his official duties at home, and the other on the Continent; the King became a prey to habitual dejection. Throughout all the troubles of his reign, when Wilkes and when "Junius" excited disaffection among his Subjects, as well as during the most distressful periods of the American War; or when the Capital exhibited scenes of outrage and of popular violence; he had maintained a serene countenance,

and manifested an unshaken firmness. But, his fortitude sunk under the bondage to which "the Coalition" had subjected him. His natural equality of temper, suavity of manners, and cheerfulness of deportment, forsaking him in a great measure, he became silent, thoughtful, taciturn, and uncommunicative. Sometimes, when he resided at Windsor, mounting his horse, accompanied by an Equerry and a single footman; after riding ten or twelve miles, scarcely opening his lips, he would dismount in order to inspect his hounds, or to view his farming improvements: then getting on horseback again, he returned back to the Queen's Lodge in the same pensive or disconsolate manner. From time to time, he admitted Mr. Jenkinson and Lord Thurlow, both of whom were Privy Councillors, to pay their respects to him. He even repeated to the latter of those distinguished persons, his wish already expressed, of going over to his Electoral Dominions for a few months; and abandoning to the Ministers, the power of which they had got possession. But Lord Thurlow, after again dissuading him from having recourse to any strong or violent expedients for procuring present emancipation; exhorted him to wait for a favorable occasion, which Fox's impetuosity or imprudence would

probably furnish, to liberate himself from the yoke of the *Coalition*. Time soon presented the propitious moment for putting this advice into execution.

September.] His Majesty remaining inflexible in his resolution not to create any *British* Peers on the ministerial recommendation, they contented themselves with tendering him a list of eight or nine *Irish* peerages. However reluctantly, he yet consented to exercise this act of the Prerogative. Nearly about the same time, the definitive Treaties of Peace were concluded with France and Spain; while David Hartley, who had been sent to Paris for the purpose, signed another Treaty with America. Hartley, who was Member for Hull, though destitute of any personal recommendations of manner, possessed some talent, with unsullied probity, added to indefatigable perseverance and labour. His sight which was very defective compelled him always to wear spectacles. The Rockingham Party had not among them a more zealous adherent; but in Parliament, the intolerable length, when increased by the dullness of his Speeches, rendered him an absolute nuisance, even to his own friends. His rising always operated like a dinner bell. One day, that he had thus wearied out the patience

of his audience; having nearly cleared a very full House, which was reduced from three hundred, to about eighty persons, half asleep; just at a time when he was expected to close, he unexpectedly moved that the Riot Act should be read, as a document necessary to elucidate, or to prove, some of his foregoing assertions. Burke, who sat close by him, and who wishing to speak to the Question under discussion, had been bursting with impatience for more than an hour and a half; finding himself so cruelly disappointed, bounced up, exclaiming, "The Riot Act! my dear friend, the Riot "Act! to what purpose! don't you see that "the mob is already completely dispersed?" The sarcastic wit of this remark, in the state of the House, which presented only empty Benches; encreased by the manner and tone of despair, in which Burke uttered it; convulsed every person present except Hartley, who never changed countenance, and insisted on the Riot Act being read by one of the Clerks.

I have heard the late Earl of Liverpool, then Mr. Jenkinson, say, that Hartley having risen to speak, about five o'clock, during the Session of the year 1779, in the month of June, or of July; and it being generally understood, that he would undoubtedly continue a long time

on his legs, as he was to conclude with making a Motion; Mr. Jenkinson profited of the occasion to breathe some country air. He walked therefore, from the House, to his residence in Parliament Street; from whence mounting his horse, he rode out to a place that he rented, some miles from town. There he dined, strolled about, and in the evening returned slowly to London. As it was then near nine o'clock; before he went down a second time to the House of Commons, he dispatched a servant to Mrs. Bennet, the Housekeeper, requesting to be informed of the names of the principal persons who had spoken in the course of the Debate, and likewise to know about what hour a Division might probably be expected to take place. The footman brought back for answer, that Mr. Hartley continued still speaking, but, was expected to close soon; and that no other person had yet risen except himself. In fact, when Mr. Jenkinson entered the House soon afterwards, Hartley remained exactly in the same place and attitude as he was, near five hours before; regardless of the general impatience, or of the profound repose into which the majority of his hearers were sunk. However in-

credible this Anecdote appears, I have related it without exaggeration.

October.] Autumn produced universal tranquillity; a Peace with Holland, following the Treaties made with France, Spain, and America. In India, hostilities had been long terminated with the Mharattas; and the death of Hyder Ally, the most formidable enemy with whom we had to contend in the East, which took place in December, 1782, enabled us to continue the contest with France in that quarter of the world, till the arrival at Madras, of the intelligence of a general pacification in Europe. I availed myself of a fortunate circumstance, to convey the first information of this event to India, and thereby stopped the further effusion of blood. Lord Walsingham, who had been newly sworn in a Member of the Privy Council, in January, 1783, possessing in virtue of his Office, two "Extraordinary Gazettes," gave me one of them; which Gazette I forwarded on the 25th of that Month, by the common Post overland, through Vienna, Constantinople, Aleppo, and Bussora, to a friend at Madras. It contained the Preliminaries of Peace just signed at Paris, between Great Britain, France, and Spain. The

King's Ministers, as well as the East India Company, were equally bound by every principle of humanity and policy, to have anticipated that Gazette. But, Lord Sydney, then Secretary of State for the Department, having delayed, on account of the unsettled nature of the Administration, which remained during many weeks in a species of suspension, after Lord Shelburne's resignation to dispatch the "Crocodile" Frigate, with the intelligence; and the Court of Directors remaining from the same cause equally torpid; my letter reached Madras about the middle of the following Month of June. Full six weeks elapsed subsequent to that time, before any official information, either from the Court of Versailles, from the British Government, or from the East India House, arrived on the Coast of Coromandel. Our position, at the moment when my account was received in that Quarter of the Globe, might be esteemed most critical, as we had formed the Siege of Cuddalore, and were under hourly apprehension of a Sally being made on the part of the enemy; whose Force within the Walls, far exceeded our own Troops stationed in the Trenches before the place. Under these circumstances, Lord Macartney, then Governor of Madras, having dis-

patched his Secretary, Sir George Staunton, to Cuddalore, with the Gazette which my friend had laid before him; Bussy, who commanded the French Forces, recognized its authenticity, and consented to publish an immediate Cessation of Arms. When the account of so extraordinary a fact was received in London from Madras, early in 1784, together with the recognition of its beneficial results to the East India Company; a Member of the Court of Directors, who then enjoyed great Consideration in Leadenhall Street; impressed with a sense of the public Benefits that had accrued from it, evinced a desire of procuring for me, as its author, some honorary Mark of the Company's satisfaction or gratitude. But, on his mentioning the subject to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, they observed, that to thank me for sending out intelligence of the conclusion of Peace, must imply a tacit condemnation of their own delay in so long withholding, or rather, in neglecting to forward, the information. The business remained therefore in oblivion: but I do not the less reflect upon it, as one of the most gratifying acts of my whole Life.

Hyder Ally, who had raised himself, like

Buonaparte, from the rank of a military Officer in the service of his native Prince, the Rajah or Sovereign of Mysore, to the possession of Supreme Power in that Country; was, beyond all competition, the greatest man whom India had beheld, since the entry of Nadir Shaw into Dehli; or perhaps since the death of Aurung Zebe. It was twice the lot of Hyder, to overrun the Carnatic, and to penetrate to the Gates of Madras. His first irruption, which took place in 1769, may even be said to have dictated the Treaty of Peace, concluded under the very walls of the City. Governor Du Pré, who then presided over the East India Company's affairs on the Coast of Coromandel; held more than one interview with Hyder, while the Negociations were pending, in order to adjust, or to accelerate the Conditions. Insensibly, during these personal conferences, as their mutual distrust and distance wore off, the Nabob put many questions to Du Pré, indicating equally the enlargement of his mind, and displaying the easy familiarity of his manners. One of the circumstances which most excited the English Governor's astonishment, was to see that Hyder had no eyebrows; nor, indeed, a single hair left on any part of his face. A man constantly attended near him, whose sole function and employ-

ment consisted in pulling out, with a pair of nippers, the first hair that made its appearance on the Sultan's countenance. Hyder perceiving the surprize which this fact occasioned in Du Pré, said to him, "I observe, that you "wonder at my having no eye-brows; as "well as at my attention to cause every hair "that appears on my face, to be immediately "eradicated. The reason I will explain to "you. I am the Nabob of Mysore, and it is "an object of policy with me, that my Sub-"jects should see no face in my dominions, "resembling the countenance of their Sove-"reign." Du Pré assured Sir John Macpherson, to whom he related this Anecdote, that he believed Hyder's practice proved him to possess a consummate knowledge of human nature, especially of his own subjects. "For," added he, "the impression which the Nabob's "physiognomy made upon myself, was not a "little encreased by its singularity." From the universal testimony of all those Europeans who had opportunities of knowing this extraordinary Prince, it is unquestionable that his manners, voice, and deportment, were the most soft and ingratiating to be imagined, whenever he wished to please, or affected to be gracious and benign: but he was terrible, and often ferocious in his anger, like the Caliph

Haroun-Alraschid, or like Peter the First of Russia. He died of Abcesses, or Cancers, in his loins; probably, the consequences of debauchery; which carried him off before he attained to old age. After a war, which from its commencement at Lexington in 1775, had lasted near eight years, the world began to enjoy repose: but the efforts made by the Coalition to consolidate their political Power, soon produced at home the most violent convulsions, which terminated in their total downfall.

Two great legal characters finished their course nearly together, in the Autumn of 1783. Dunning, in August; and Wallace, in November. Both were eminent in their profession; but all the intellectual superiority lay on the side of the former. Yet fortune had a greater share than merit or talents, in elevating the one to the Peerage, while the other failed of attaining to that Eminence. If Lord North's Administration had continued two or three years longer, and consequently if Lord Shelburne had been excluded from Office, their destiny might probably have been reversed. I have been assured, that a short time before Lord Ashburton's decease, these two distin-

guished Lawyers finding themselves by accident in the same inn at Bagshot, the one, on his way down into Devonshire, and the other returning from thence to London; both conscious that their recovery from the disorders under which they laboured, was desperate; expressed a strong mutual wish to enjoy a last interview with each other. For that purpose, they were carried into the same apartment, laid down on two Sofas nearly opposite, and remained for a long time in conversation. They then parted, as men who could not hope to meet again in this world. By Wallace's decease, Lee became Attorney-General, and Mansfield was replaced in his former situation of Solicitor-General, which he had filled under Lord North's Administration.

I passed a considerable part of the Autumn with Lord Sackville, at Drayton in Northamptonshire. Though in his sixty-eighth year, he possessed activity of body, chearfulness of temper, and the perfect possession of all his faculties. Drayton had formerly belonged to the Mordaunts, Earls of Peterborough, from whom it passed into the possession of Henry, Duke of Norfolk, by his marriage

with Lady Mary Mordaunt, under the reign of William the Third. He did not however long retain it, having been divorced from the Duchess, on account of a criminal connexion which she carried on with Sir John Germain: and as the Duke had no issue by her, Drayton reverted to the lady. The room which had been occupied by Sir John Germain, when a visitor there in the Duke of Norfolk's time, communicated by a spacious dark closet, with a large apartment, then the Duchess's bed-chamber. This closet was divided by a wooden partition, of about six feet high, which did not however reach to the ceiling. Sir John having, through the closet in question, gained access to the Duchess's bed, was one day nearly surprised by the Duke; who, coming unexpectedly to the door, which he found shut and fastened, demanded admittance. The lover, thus interrupted, had only time to jump out of bed in his shirt, to reach the closet, and to mount astride on the partition; where he sat, not daring to descend on the other side, because the noise would have disclosed the place of his retreat. As if to encrease his apprehensions, the Duchess's lap-dog, which lay near her bed-side, alarmed at the accident, followed him to the door of

the closet, barking violently all the time. The Duke, nevertheless, it seems, did not discover him, and he reached his own room in safety, after passing some minutes in a most perilous, as well as awkward situation.

Lord Sackville having, as is well known, assumed the name of Germain, and having inherited the Estate of Drayton, it was natural to enquire how he came to be called to that succession. He has frequently related to me the particulars, which I shall recount in his own words.

"Sir John Germain's extraction," said he, "which was uncertain, and variously reported, has given rise to much discussion. His reputed father bore Arms, as a private soldier, in the guards of William the Second, Prince of Orange: but his mother, who possessed great personal charms, fame asserted to have been that Prince's mistress; and her son was believed to stand in a very close degree of consanguinity to King William the Third. Other circumstances confirm this opinion. Sir John Germain inherited no paternal Coat of Arms; but he assumed, or rather used, as his seal and

" armorial bearing, a red Cross: meaning " thereby probably to imply, that his pre- " tensions ascended higher than his ostensible " Birth. Even when, by the provisions of his " widow, Lady Betty Germain's Will, I in- " herited Drayton, on the condition of as- " suming the *Name* of Germain, no mention " was made of the *Arms*, as is customary in " almost all similar cases. King William, " with whom Sir John came over here from " Holland, in 1688, unquestionably regarded " him with distinguishing affection, and ad- " vanced him in life. He became a Member " of Parliament, received the honour of " Knighthood; and various pecuniary grants " or donations to a considerable amount, " were conferred on him by that Prince.

" Sir John Germain, who possessed a very " handsome person, was always a distinguish- " ed favourite of the other sex. His con- " nexion with the Duchess of Norfolk, finally " procured him this place and Estate, she " having married him, after obtaining a " Divorce from her first husband. They " lived together several years; but no " children being left alive, and the title of " Peterborough having reverted to a collateral

" branch of the Mordaunt family, she be-
" queathed to him, by her will, in the year
" 1705, the house and property of Drayton,
" which lay entirely in her own disposal. Sir
" John, who, though naturalized, and become
" by long residence in this country, in a great
" degree an Englishman, retained neverthe-
" less many of the habits and particularities
" of a native of Holland, attached himself
" much to my mother. She being the daugh-
" ter of Marshal Colyear, brother to the first
" Earl of Portmore, who had entered early
" into the Dutch service, and who was an old
" friend of Sir John Germain; he always
" called her his countrywoman, visited fre-
" quently at my father's house, and was
" kindy received by the Duke and Duchess
" of Dorset. Finding himself in possession
" of a considerable landed property, after the
" death of his wife; and desirous of trans-
" mitting it to his own descendants, but be-
" ing destitute of any natural connexions, he
" meditated to engraft himself on some dis-
" tinguished family of this kingdom. For the
" purpose, while resident at Bristol Wells, on
" account of his health, he cast his eyes upon
" Lady Betty Berkeley, a daughter of the Earl
" of Berkeley, whose birth, character, and ac-

"complishments, rendered her every way "worthy of his choice. She was indeed, "many years younger than Sir John; but, "as she possessed a superior understanding, "added to the most correct deportment, she "acquired great influence over him. Having "been, herself, intimate with the Duchess of "Dorset, the friendship between the two "families became cemented by the alliance. "Sir John Germain had several children by "her, who all died young; and in the even- "ing of his life, becoming a martyr to the "gout, as well as to other diseases, Lady "Betty, assiduously performed every duty "of an affectionate wife, and of a careful "nurse, about his person.

"A short time before his decease, which "happened in the year 1718, having called "her to his bedside; 'Lady Betty,' said he, "'I have made you a very indifferent hus- "band, and particularly of late years, when "infirmities have rendered me a burden to "myself: but I shall not be much longer "troublesome to you. I advise you never "again to marry an old man: but I strenu- "ously exhort you to marry when I am "gone, and I will endeavour to put it in

"your power. You have fulfilled every
"obligation towards me in an exemplary
"manner, and I wish to demonstrate my
"sense of your merits. I have, therefore,
"by my Will bequeathed you this Estate,
"which I received from my first wife; and
"which, as she gave to me, so I leave to
"you. I hope you will marry, and have
"children to inherit it. But, if events
"should determine otherwise, or if you
"should not have issue that survive you,
"it would give me pleasure to think, that
"Drayton descended after your decease, to
"a younger son of my friend, the Duchess
"of Dorset.' In consequence of this *Wish*,
"expressed by Sir John Germain on his
"death-bed, I now enjoy the Estate. Lady
"Betty, though young when left a widow,
"and though she survived him above fifty
"years, never married a second time. Her
"friendship for my mother, always conti-
"nued, without diminution; and her respect
"for the desire manifested by her husband,
"induced her to fulfil his wishes, to the ex-
"clusion of any of her own relations."

While writing on this subject, I shall endeavour to throw into one point, some of the nu-

merous particulars relative to his own family, which in the course of conversation I heard from Lord Sackville. They all may be said to hold, more or less to English History. In order to give them more verity and accuracy, I shall, as nearly as I am able, present them in his own words.

" The Sackvilles," said he, " who came " into England with the Conqueror, and who " derived their name from a small village of " Low Normandy, have never branched in " the lapse of more than seven Hundred years. " During the two last Centuries, the family " has produced three distinguished men, of " whom the first was the Lord Treasurer " Buckhurst, whom our great Elizabeth " thought worthy to succeed Lord Burleigh " in that high Office, and whom James the " First created Earl of Dorset. It would " have been fortunate for the Scottish King, " if he had presided longer in the Councils " of the Crown; but he soon followed his " royal Mistress, and made way, after a short " interval, for those favourites, Carr and " Villiers, who covered James with disgrace. " His grandson, Edward, Earl of Dorset, " the friend and contemporary of Lord Her-

" bert of Cherbury, but, better known by
" his Duel with Lord Bruce, performed an
" eminent part under Charles the First. He
" accompanied that Prince during the civil
" wars, and fought in most of the actions,
" from Edge Hill, down to Naseby. But,
" like the virtuous Lord Falkland, he re-
" gretted and lamented the very advantages
" to which he contributed by his sword.
" Many of his letters, written between 1643
" and 1646, which are preserved among the
" Dorset Papers; descriptive of the scenes
" of havock then acting in every part of
" the kingdom, convey a high idea of his
" principles. His days were embittered and ab-
" breviated by his royal Master's tragical end,
" which he only survived about three years.

" My Grandfather, Charles, commonly
" called the witty Earl of Dorset, died about
" ten years before I was born, after having
" survived in a great degree his faculties.
" He was during his whole life, the patron of
" men of genius, and the dupe of women.
" Bountiful to both, though he inherited not
" only the paternal Estate of the Sackvilles,
" but likewise that of the Cranfields, Earls of
" Middlesex, in right of his mother; yet at

" his decease, my father, then eighteen years " of age, possessed so slender a fortune, that " his guardians, when they sent him to travel " on the Continent, allowed him only eight " hundred Pounds a year, for his provision. " Charles, Earl of Dorset, married three times; " but only one of these marriages contributed " either to his honour, or to his felicity. His " first wife was the celebrated Countess of Fal- " mouth, well known by her gallantries; the " Miss *Bagot* of " Grammont's Memoirs," " whom Dryden has designated as 'a teeming " widow, but a barren wife.' Happily she left him " no issue; and in his second matrimonial con- " nexion he consulted not only his inclination, " but his judgment, when he gave his hand " to a daughter of the Earl of Northampton. " He had then nearly attained his fiftieth " year; and as he was only twenty-three at " the time of Charles the Second's Restora- " tion, the excesses of that dissolute reign, " in which Lord Dorset led the way, had al- " ready enfeebled his constitution. Strongly " attached to the principles of civil liberty, " he quitted James the Second, when that in- " fatuated Prince attempted to introduce " Popery; and conducted the Princess Anne " of Denmark from her father's Palace at

"Whitehall, to the Coach which waited for "her in St. James's Park, in order to convey "her to Nottingham. While crossing over "from the Palace to the Park, by night, and "in Winter, one of her Royal Highness's "shoes sticking fast in the mud, the accident "threatened to impede her escape: but Lord "Dorset immediately drawing off his white "glove, put it on the Princess's foot, and "placed her safely in the Carriage. To King "William, my Grandfather rendered himself "not less acceptable, than he had been to "Charles the Second; and I have always "been assured that it only depended on him-"self, to have been raised to a Dukedom "under William's reign: but his wife's re-"lations, the Comptons, treating the matter, "when he mentioned it to them, with great "indifference, he said, 'the Earldom of "Dorset was quite good enough for him.' "In fact, my father only attained to that "Dignity, near thirty years afterwards, under "George the First.

"Extenuated by pleasures and indulgencies, "the Earl of Dorset sunk under a premature "old age; though not as early as Roches-"ter, Buckingham, and so many others

" of his-contemporaries had done, includ-
" ing Charles the Second himself; all of
" whom fell victims to their immoderate
" pursuit of enjoyments. A few years be-
" fore he died, he married a woman named
" Roche, of very obscure connexions, who
" held him in a sort of captivity down at
" Bath, where he expired at about sixty
" nine. She suffered few persons to approach
" him during his last illness, or rather decay;
" and was supposed to have converted his
" weakness of mind, to her own objects of
" personal acquisition. He was indeed con-
" sidered to be fallen into a state of such
" imbecility, as rendered it necessary to ap-
" point guardians, with a view to prevent his
" injuring the family Estate: but the inten-
" tion was nevertheless abandoned. You
" have no doubt heard, and it is a fact, that
" with a view of ascertaining whether Lord
" Dorset continued to be of a sane mind, *Prior*,
" whom he had patronized and always regard-
" ed with predilection, was sent down to Bath
" by the family. Having obtained access to
" the Earl, and conversed with him, Prior
" made his report in these words. 'Lord
" Dorset is certainly greatly declined in his
" understanding; but he *drivels* so much better

"sense even now, than any other man can "*talk*, that you must not call me into Court, "as a witness to prove him an idiot.'

"My father having lost his own mother "when very young, was brought up chiefly "by the Dowager Countess of Northampton, "his grandmother; who being particularly "acceptable to Queen Mary, she commanded "the Countess always to bring her little "grandson, Lord Buckhurst, to Kensington "Palace, though at that time hardly four "years of age; and he was allowed to amuse "himself with a child's Cart in the Gallery. "King William, like almost all Dutchmen, "never failed to attend the tea table every "evening. It happened that Her Majesty "having, one afternoon, by his desire, made "tea, and waiting for the King's arrival, who "was engaged on business in his Cabinet, at "the other extremity of the Gallery; the "boy hearing the Queen express her impa- "tience at the delay, ran away to the closet, "dragging after him the Cart. When he ar- "rived at the door, he knocked; and the "King asking 'Who is there?' 'Lord Buck,' "answered he, 'And what does Lord Buck "want with me?' replied His Majesty.

" 'You must come to tea directly,' said he, " 'the Queen is waiting for you.' King " William immediately laid down his pen, " and opened the door; then taking the child " in his arms, placed Lord Buckhurst in the " Cart, and seizing the pole, drew them both " along the Gallery, quite to the room in which " were seated the Queen, Lady Northamp- " ton, and the company. But, no sooner " had he entered the Apartment, than, ex- " hausted with the effort, which had forced " the blood upon his lungs, and being na- " turally asthmatic, he threw himself into a " chair, and for some minutes was incapable " of uttering a word, breathing with the ut- " most difficulty. The Countess of North- " ampton, shocked at the consequences of " her grandson's indiscretion, which threw " the whole Circle into great consternation, " would have punished him: but the King " interposed in his behalf; and the story is " chiefly interesting, because, (as serving to " shew how kindly he could behave towards " a troublesome child,) it places that Prince " in a more amiable point of view, than he is " commonly represented in History. Henry " the Fourth of France, when playing with " his own children, could not have manifested

"more amenity. The Queen being accus- "tomed to take Lord Buckhurst in her arms, "and to caress him when he came to Ken- "sington; his Nurse, aware of the circum- "stance, gave him secretly a written paper, "which she charged him to deliver privately "to Her Majesty. He did so, without "acquainting Lady Northampton, who being "present, would have interposed to prevent "him: but the Queen insisted on perusing "its contents. It contained a petition drawn "up by the woman, in favour of her brother, "then condemned to death for a capital "crime. Queen Mary, touched with the "incident, laid it before the King, who "caused enquiry to be made into the cir- "cumstances of the case, with a view of ex- "tending mercy to the culprit. On exami- "nation, the crime from its magnitude, not "admitting of pardon, the Queen, as the only "alleviation left in her power to bestow, "gave Lord Buckhurst a purse containing ten "Jacobusses; enjoining him to present it to "his Nurse from herself, with the assurances "of her concern at the impossibility that "existed, of saving her brother's life."

"I was born," continued Lord Sackville,

" in the year 1716, in the Haymarket, where
" my father then resided; and received my
" name from George the First, who was my
" godfather, having honoured the ceremony
" of my baptism by his personal presence.
" One of the earliest circumstances which
" made an impression on my mind, was that
" of being carried, at five years of age, by the
" servants, to the gate of St. James's Palace,
" in order to see the great Duke of Marl-
" borough, as he came out of Court. He
" was then in a state of caducity; but still
" retained the vestiges of a most graceful
" figure, though he was obliged to be sup-
" ported by a servant on each side, while the
" tears ran down his cheeks, just as he is
" drawn by Dr. Johnson. The populace
" cheered him, while passing through the
" crowd to enter his carriage. I have however
" heard my father say, that the Duke of
" Marlborough by no means fell into irreco-
" verable or settled Dotage, as we commonly
" suppose; but manifested at times a sound
" understanding, till within a very short pe-
" riod of his Decease; occasionally attending
" the privy Council, and sometimes speaking
" in his official capacity, on points of business,
" with his former ability.

"No man manifested greater zeal than my "father, for the succession in the House of "Brunswic. After Queen Anne's death in "1714, he was sent to Hanover, returned with "the new King from Heren Hausen to Eng-"land in September, and had the honour to "accompany George the First, in the Coach "which conveyed him on his landing, from "Greenwich to London. Thirty-three years "before, he had been a suitor for the hand of "the Queen, whom he then succeeded; having "come over with that view from Germany to "this country in 1681, by permission of his "father, Ernest Augustus; but the proposi-"tion failed of success. On his return, "riding a common post horse from London "to Gravesend, where he took shipping for "Holland, the horse and the road being "equally bad, he got a severe fall, and arriv-"ed at Gravesend covered with mud. The "King, who related this circumstance to "Lord Dorset, as they came up together in "the Coach, recognised and pointed out the "spot where the misadventure befel him.

"When the intelligence of his decease, "which took place near Osnabrugh, in the "end of July, 1727, arrived in London; the

" Cabinet having immediately met, thought
" proper to dispatch the Duke of Dorset with
" the news, to the Prince of Wales. He then
" resided at Kew, in a state of great aliena-
" tion from the King; the two Courts main-
" taining no communication. Some little
" time being indispensable to enable my father
" to appear in a suitable manner before the
" new Monarch, he sent forward the Duchess
" his wife, in order to announce the event.
" She arrived at Kew, just as the Prince,
" according to his invariable custom, having
" undressed himself after dinner, had lain
" down in bed. The Duchess having demanded
" permission to see him immediately, on bu-
" siness of the greatest importance, the ser-
" vants acquainted the Princess of Wales
" with her arrival; and the Duchess, without
" a moment's hesitation, informed her that
" George the First lay dead at Osnabrugh;
" that the Cabinet had ordered her husband
" to be the bearer of the intelligence to his
" successor, and that the Duke would follow
" her in a short time. She added, that not
" a moment should be lost in communicating
" so great an event to the Prince, as the Mi-
" nisters wished him to come up to London
" that evening, in order to summon a Privy

" Council, issue a Proclamation, and take " other requisite measures at the commencement of a new Reign.

" To the propriety of all these measures, " the Princess assented; but at the same time " informed the Duchess, that she could not " venture to go into her husband's room, as " he had only just taken off his cloaths, and " composed himself to Sleep. 'Besides,' " added she, 'the Prince will not give credit " to the intelligence; but will exclaim that " it is a trick, designed for the purpose of " exposing him.' The Duchess continuing " nevertheless to remonstrate with Her Royal " Highness, on the injurious consequences of " losing time; and adding, that the Duke of " Dorset would expect to find the Prince not " only apprized of it, but ready to accompany " him to London; the Princess of Wales took " off her shoes, opened the Chamber door softly, and advanced up to the Bed-side, while " my Mother remained at the threshold, till she " should be allowed to enter the Apartment. " As soon as the Princess came near the Bed, " a voice from under the cloaths cried out in " German, 'Was is das?' 'I am come, Sir,' " answered she, 'to announce to you the

" death of the King, which has taken place
" in Germany.' 'That is one damned lye,
" one damned trick von my father,' returned
" the Prince, 'I do not believe one word of
" it.' 'Sir,' said the Princess, 'it is most
" certain. The Duchess of Dorset has just
" brought the intelligence, and the Duke will
" be here immediately. The Ministers hope
" that you will repair to town this evening,
" as your presence there is indispensable.'
" Her Royal Highness then threw herself on
" her knees, to kiss the new King's hand;
" and beckoning to the Duchess of Dorset
" to advance, she came in likewise, knelt
" down, and assured him of the indisputable
" truth of his father's Decease. Convinced at
" length of the fact, he consented to get up
" and dress himself. The Duke of Dorset
" arriving in his Coach and six, almost immedi-
" ately afterwards, George the Second quitted
" Kew the same evening, for London." I
return to the progress of public affairs.

November.] When we reflect on the manner in which Fox had attained to Power; as well as on the long, though ineffectual Resistance made by the King; followed by his sullen Resignation under a Yoke which he found it

impossible to elude, or to throw off; — when we consider these Facts, it cannot excite Surprize, that Fox should meditate the Means of confirming and perpetuating his precarious tenure of Office. He felt himself personally odious to the Sovereign, whom he had too deeply offended, easily to obtain Forgiveness. From that Quarter therefore, he well knew that he might be undermined or subverted; but he could not hope to receive a cordial Support. Unfortunately, he had likewise recently lost in a very considerable Degree, the Confidence and Attachment of the People. So long as the American War lasted, he retained, in Defiance of his private Irregularities, their ardent Affection. Of this Sentiment, they gave him many Proofs; particularly after his Duel with Mr. Adam, when the Wound which he received, exciting Apprehensions for his Life, the Populace surrounded his Lodgings, with Testimonies of clamorous Anxiety, as well as of corresponding Resentment against his ministerial and personal Opponents.

Since that Time, the Inhabitants of Westminster manifesting the same Partiality, had elected him one of their Representatives in Parliament; a Situation which enabled him

not only to defend their Liberties in the House of Commons; but, conferred likewise the Means of convoking, haranguing, and propelling them in tumultuary Assemblies, convened in Westminster Hall. To a Man of Fox's Energy and Talents, this additional Facility of thus presiding in a species of Mob, at the very Door of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as at a very inconsiderable Distance from the royal Residence, doubled his Consequence; and might be said to render him a Tribune of the People, in the most literal sense of the Word, nearly as that Office was exercised in ancient Rome, previous to the Subversion of the Common-wealth. Nor had his Popularity suffered at all in the general Estimation, by his Acceptance of Office under Lord Rockingham; though the Fallacy and Delusion of many of his Promises or Assertions had become sufficiently manifest, even during his short Stay in the Cabinet, under that Administration. On the Motives, and on the Propriety or Necessity of his Resignation, after Lord Shelburne's Elevation to the Head of the Treasury, Mankind seemed indeed divided; some applauding it, as an Act of magnanimous public Virtue and Self-Devotion; while others beheld in it only personal Rivality, Enmity, and Resentment.

But, relative to his Junction with his present Colleague Lord North, the Suffrages of the World, from the highest down to the lowest Classes, united to reprobate it in a greater, or in a less Degree. And I have always thought that Fox himself, in his Impatience to regain Office, miscalculated, or did not sufficiently appreciate the Operation on the public Mind, of his Conduct, in thus taking to his Bosom in March, 1783, the very Minister, on whose Head, in March, 1782, he had invoked the utmost Vengeance of an offended and ruined Nation. Some longer interval of Time was required to reconcile Men to such an apparent Dereliction of Principle, and total Sacrifice of Decorum, at the shrine of Ambition. Here the Transmutation had been so rapid, as not only to shock the most ordinary Understanding; but even to impress with secret Concern or Disgust, many of those who, nevertheless, affected to justify, and to support the Measure. Pope says,

"Lust, through some certain Strainers well refin'd,
"Is gentle Love, and charms all Female kind."

But it must pass through those Refiners,

and leave its Dross behind, or conceal it, before Love can charm, or challenge Respect. I have heard Colonel Macalister, late Governor of the island of Penang in the East Indies, frequently assert, that there existed in the Town of that Colony, a Receptacle or Space of Ground, surrounded by walls, into which was commonly thrown every species of corrupted and putrified Substance. In a hot Climate, the process from Dissolution to Revivification, we know, is very quick. Maggots in immense numbers, of a prodigious Size, were speedily generated or produced from this Filth; which the Chinese Inhabitants of the Settlement, who possessed no Means of regular Subsistence, and who therefore, were not fastidious about their Diet, used to collect with Rakes, from off the Heaps of Carcases, and to devour immediately, after frying them in Ghee, or melted Butter. Colonel Macalister indeed added, that the Chinese who used such Aliments, became subject to cutaneous and leprous Diseases of the most inveterate Kind. We perceive however, that all animal and vegetable Substances perpetually change their Forms; and disgusting as this Recital may be, that Sentiment only arises from the Rapidity of

the Metamorphosis. Precisely of the same Kind, in a political Sense, appeared the Coalition beween Lord North and Fox; a Transformation, which being consummated in the Space of a few Hours, was then imposed upon the House of Commons and the Nation. But, the English, indignant at such a compact, rejected in general with Abhorrence, the Dish served up to them, and dismissed the State Cooks who had prepared it for the Country.

Well aware as Fox was therefore, that though he had a second time forced his way into high Employment, yet that he neither enjoyed the favor of the Crown, nor any longer possessed the affection of the people in general; it was natural he should look to some other Quarter, for permanent support. In the two Houses of Parliament, where he commanded a decided majority, he beheld the foundation on which he might construct a Citadel, unassailable, as he conceived, either by the Sovereign, or by the Nation. India, which presented the materials for his edifice, seemed to invite his exertions to re-model that vast Empire, convulsed and half subverted by internal discord or corruption, added to ex-

ternal hostilities. Burke, whose friend or relation of the same name, William Burke, was already stationed in the East, as Agent with the Rajah of Tanjore; and who had, himself, taken a most active part in all the Parliamentary Discussions arising out of the Reports of the Secret and Select Committees, during the two preceding Sessions; aspired with equal ardor, to second Fox in this great undertaking. It had even been announced from the Throne, when the King terminated the sitting of Parliament, in the preceding month of July, that India would form the first object of their Deliberations, on their again meeting for business.

During the course of the Autumn, Fox and Burke therefore drew up, and prepared the memorable Bill, which it was intended to introduce, as soon as the Session should commence in November. They communicated all the heads and outlines of it to Lord North; with whom, indeed, as being in his Department, the Measure ought strictly to have originated: but, who was induced in this instance, as in many other cases, to allow the superior energies of his Colleague, added to the superior information possessed by Burke on the subject, to supplant, and in

some measure to supercede him in his official functions. The Bill, thus far organized, and having been approved in the Cabinet, was then submitted to the King, for his perusal and sanction; accompanied with becoming expressions of the wish and desire entertained by Ministers, to accommodate it to His Majesty's ideas upon every point, before it should be brought into Parliament. Unable of himself, without some assistance, to form a competent judgment upon its complicated provisions, operation, and general results, it was understood and believed that the King had early thought proper to lay it confidentially before Lord Thurlow; desiring at the same time to know his legal opinion respecting its nature. Common rumour added, that the opinion delivered by Lord Thurlow, represented it as calculated to render Ministers independent of the Crown, and as containing many Clauses injurious to, or nearly subversive of the British Constitution itself; but that His Majesty was advised to wait for its more complete developement, before he expressed any disapprobation, or attempted any resistance. Such might be considered the general state and aspect of things in the first days of November, when a curious incident which unexpectedly took place at St. James's, and

which excited no little speculation, seemed to shew that the ground on which the Ministry stood, was hollow and treacherous.

Sir Eyre Coote, who long commanded the armies of the East India Company, on the Coast of Coromandel, with distinguished reputation; after repulsing Hyder Ally, and rescuing the Carnatic, expired at Madras, worn out and extenuated by disease, on the 26th of April, 1783; having survived his Antagonist Hyder, scarcely five months. The intelligence of his Decease, which was transmitted overland, reached Leadenhall Street, early in November. No sooner had it been communicated to Fox, than he immediately destined the Riband of the Order of the *Bath*, which became vacant on Sir Eyre's death, for one of his intimate friends, Mr. Bielby Thompson. This Gentleman, who possessed a very fine Estate in Yorkshire, at Wetherby Grange, near the town of that name, sat at the time in Parliament, for Thirske in the County of York. Fox, after conferring on the subject with the Duke of Portland and Lord North, whom he acquainted with his intentions, repaired to St. James's; where having gone into the Closet, he an-

nounced to the King the event that had taken place in India. He then mentioned Mr. Thompson, as the person whom he wished, on the part of Ministers, to recommend for the vacant Riband; and His Majesty in answer, seems to have expressed that species of acquiescence, more probably tacit, than couched in precise words, which the Secretary interpreted, whether judiciously or not, to constitute full compliance. Without waiting therefore, for any more explicit declaration from the King on the subject, as prudence seemed to dictate, Fox informed Mr. Thompson, of his having received the royal assent, and added that the Investiture would take place at the next Levee. Directions were accordingly issued to Norroy King of Arms, and the proper officers belonging to the Heralds' College, to attend at St. James's for the purpose. The circumstance being publickly known, Mr. Thompson was felicitated by anticipation, on the honour destined for him: but the sequel proved that Fox had either miscalculated or misunderstood, the whole transaction.

On the day fixed, His Majesty went to St. James's at the usual hour, to prepare for the

Levee. After he had finished dressing, he sent out the Groom of the Bed Chamber in waiting, as was his frequent custom, to bring him information relative to the number of persons who were arrrived. The Gentleman returning, acquainted the King, that besides a great croud come to attend the Levee, the Officers of the *Bath* stood likewise without, ready for the Investiture. With some surprize marked in his countenance, the King asked, what Investiture he meant? To which question he replied, not without hesitation, that he understood it was intended to confer the Order of the *Bath* on Mr. Bielby Thompson, who was there in person for that express purpose. His Majesty made no answer; and immediately afterwards, the Duke of Portland entering, went into the Closet. In the course of his Audience, the King observed to him that no *official* account having been as yet received from India, of Sir Eyre Coote's death; however authentic the information of that event, transmitted from Madras, might prove; and his Riband, together with the other Insignia of the Order, not having been hitherto delivered back to himself; he apprehended it informal to fill up the vacancy, till those points were previously ascertained and executed. The Duke, taken by surprize, after attempting

respectfully to bring His Majesty to another way of thinking, withdrew; and finding Mr. Fox in the next room, communicated to him this most unexpected and mortifying piece of information.

The Secretary, equally astonished, instantly went in, when a long conversation took place between him and the Sovereign. In its progress, Fox stated that having, some days preceding, laid the business before His Majesty; and conceiving that he had obtained his royal approbation and consent to confer on Mr. Thompson the vacant Red Riband, it had been so signified to that gentleman; who, together with the proper Officers, were then without, in readiness for the Ceremony. He added, that no possible doubt could be entertained of Sir Eyre Coote's death; and that a disappointment, after the preparations and publicity of the affair, could not fail to be attended with very unpleasant consequences to Administration in the general opinion. To all these arguments and expostulations, the King, after alledging his own reasons, remained inflexible. Fox therefore quitting the Closet, returned to his Colleagues, various of whom, assembled in the outer room, were waiting under considerable

anxiety, and imparted to them the result of his Audience. No little confusion ensued among them. Mr. Thompson, apprized of the fact, returned home. The officers of the *Bath*, ordered to withdraw, were acquainted that the Ceremony expected, would not take place on that day. Every person present, formed his own comments or conjectures, respecting the scene which had just passed; and the old Courtiers did not fail to draw inferences from it, highly adverse to Ministers. It was obvious that the King, who felt no disposition to oblige them, had got possession of the advantage ground in the contest; whereas Fox had acted with some degree of indiscretion, in presuming upon an assent, rather implied or assumed, than unequivocally expressed. Many men considered the whole proceeding as concerted, and the result of deeper causes than were apparent to common observers. By exposing the Administration to ridicule, as well as to mortification, it unquestionably served to prepare the public mind, for some approaching convulsion or alteration in the government.

If the business of Sir Eyre Coote's Riband was attended with these unpleasant results to

the Ministry, they received on the other hand, just at this time, a prodigious accession of strength and consideration from the avowed junction of the Prince of Wales; who having attained his twenty-first year in the preceding month of August, had recently established his Court and residence at Carlton House. Nature had bestowed uncommon Graces on his figure and person. Convivial, as well as social in his temper, destitute of all reserve, and affable even to familiarity in his reception of every person who had the honor to approach him; he presented in these respects, a contrast to the shy, correct, and distant manners of the King his father. *Endowed with all the aptitudes to profit of instruction, his mind had been cultivated with great care; and he was probably the only Prince in Europe, Heir to a powerful Monarchy, competent to peruse the Greek, as well as the Roman Poets and Historians, in their own language. Humane and compassionate, his purse was open to every application of distress; nor was it ever shut against Genius or Merit. Even if these virtues were mingled with alloy, yet his facility, his love of pleasure, and his inattention to Economy, all might derive some Apology from

his youth, and the Elevation on which he stood; circumstances that necessarily exposed him to great, as well as corresponding temptations of every kind.

Nor ought we, if we candidly examine the subject, to feel either surprize, or any degree of moral disapprobation, at the predilection and preference which he had imbibed, and which he openly manifested for an Administration, odious to his father. When he looked back on the twenty-three years of George the Third's Reign, he beheld little matter of admiration, though ample reason for regret. At the peace of 1763, Lord Bute had sacrificed or restored to France and Spain, almost all the acquisitions of Pitt. Wilkes and "Junius," aided by Churchill and Mason, had covered with Opprobrium or with Ridicule the Ministers employed between the Treaty of Fontainbleau, and the commencement of the American War: nor had the Sovereign himself escaped their severe animadversions on his personal conduct and government. In the gulf of the American contest, the treasures of England had been expended, her Navy disgraced, her commerce nearly destroyed, her public burthens accumulated, her national

Debt immensely augmented, her Armies defeated or made prisoners, and we had finally lost a vast Empire beyond the Atlantic. Precisely as this calamitous Consummation took place, the Prince of Wales, emerging from the restraint under which he had been hitherto held, made his appearance on the theatre of public life, and emancipated himself from parental superintendance or controul. It was not merely natural, but almost unavoidable, that he should view those events through the Optics and representations of Fox and Burke, rather than through any other medium. Neither George the Second, nor Frederick his son, could plead the same Apology, or exhibit such causes to justify enlisting, as they respectively did, under the party adverse to the measures of the Crown. Fox and his Friends, who well knew how to improve these favourable circumstances, contrived to effect a deep, as well as a permanent impression on the affections, no less than on the understanding, of the Heir Apparent.

11th November.] The Session of Parliament now commenced; a Session rendered memorable beyond any other of the long Reign of George the Third, by the magnitude, singu-

larity, and importance of its events. A species of ostensible unanimity, like the Calm that precedes the Storm, characterized its opening; Mr. Pitt concurring in the Address to the Throne moved by Administration, for approving the definitive Treaties concluded with France, Spain, and America: though he did not fail to remark with indignant asperity, on the inconsistence of thanking the Crown for merely consummating the very work, of which he and his Colleagues had laid all the foundations, in consequence of which national benefit, they had been driven from Office. Fox, with much ingenuity, endeavoured to demonstrate to the House, that the definitive Treaties, far from being servile transcripts of the Preliminaries, were on the contrary materially altered in favour of this Country. And with a view to prove his assertion, he particularized three Articles, on each of which, as he asserted, important Ameliorations had taken place. These were relative to the condition of the British inhabitants of the Island of Tobago; an accurate definition of the Geographical limits within which the Gum Trade on the coast of Africa might in future be carried on; and lastly, the precise Boundaries affixed to the possessions of our Allies in the East

Indies. I own however, that the aggregate merit of these concessions, or rather alterations, did not appear to me entitled to much Encomium. They seemed to be rather inaccuracies or inadvertencies, which every Administration must equally have perceived and remedied, after the Lapse of a few months.

Pitt made no answer to the Secretary of State's Speech; in the progress of which he had announced his intention of bringing forward almost immediately, his plan for the new government of India. But Governor Johnstone, with the warmth, not to say violence, which characterized every sentiment that usually fell from his lips, claimed for Mr. Hastings all the merit of expelling Tippoo Sultan from the Carnatic, as well as of effecting a Treaty of peace with the Mharatta Empire: Services which, if they were justly due to the ability or wisdom of the Governor General, might have challenged higher testimonies of national or parliamentary approbation, than Fox's improvements contained in the definitive Treaty made with France. Johnstone concluded by warning the Ministers not to enforce any plans for the Administration of India, with-

out previously consulting the persons, who, from local knowledge and experience, knew the remedies most applicable to the disorders of those remote and valuable Possessions. The Treasury Bench observed a profound silence, and the House soon afterwards broke up; all men looking forward with anxiety to the great Measure now announced from official authority, and of which the leading features were already known to be of the most vigorous, as well as affirmative nature. The celebrated "East India Bill" followed, after the interval of a few days. It was natural to suppose that Lord North, within whose Department lay all regulation of our concerns in that quarter of the Globe, would of course open the Measure to the House. But, instead of so doing, he absented himself on account of indisposition, leaving Fox to perform the task; a line of conduct, which, whether it arose from real necessity, or whether it was preconcerted, operated very disadvantageously on the minds of many individuals attached to Lord North, who had hitherto supported the *Coalition*. They beheld themselves in fact, completely abandoned by their antient Leader, who seemed to have delivered up himself, his followers, his Sovereign, and his

political principles, to the uncontroled dominion of his new Associates, Fox and Burke.

It is no longer possible, after the lapse of above thirty years, to deceive either ourselves or mankind, relative to the nature, provisions, and effects of the Bill in question. Its most determined enemies cannot dispute the energy, vigor, and decision, which breathed through every Clause; nor will candid men refuse to allow the beneficial tendency of many of its regulations. But, neither can the friends of Fox, however they may idolize his memory, deny the unwarrantable spirit of ambition, rapacity, and confiscation, by which it was equally distinguished. The instant seizure of all the effects, papers, and possessions of a great chartered Company; the total extinction of the Court of Directors, who had so long conducted its affairs; and the substitution of two new Boards, named by the Ministry, through the medium of Parliament, for the future Government of India; — these measures, however their necessity might apparently be made out, seemed rather revolutionary subversions of property by arbitrary authority, than suited to the mild, moderate, and equitable spirit of the

British Constitution. Other features of the Bill, appeared still more open to objection, since they evidently vested in Administration, and therefore in Fox, as the Ministerial Leader, a power independant of the Sovereign. Such, in particular, might be esteemed the Clause, which extended the duration of the Act, to *four* years ; a term exceeding the possible period to which the existence of the House of Commons then sitting, could be protracted, they having already entered on their fourth Session.

Many other regulations, growing out of, or connected with the measure, excited just alarm. Even in the selection of the Seven Commissioners, who were to be appointed for the future Administration of the East India Company's affairs at home and abroad, Fox's ascendant over his Colleague was clearly defined: Lord Fitzwilliam, as the personal representative of the deceased Marquis of Rockingham, being placed at the head of the Board; while Mr. Frederick Montagu, another most respectable adherent of the same political Party, stood second in the list. Colonel North, Lord Viscount Lewisham, and Sir Gilbert Elliot, the three next Commissioners, represented Lord North's interest

and connexions. But, in order to secure at once the majority of voices, together with the efficient controul of the Board itself, Sir Henry Fletcher, and Mr. Robert Gregory, were added to the Members. Both these last named Gentlemen, well known for their devoted attachment to Fox, and possessing Seats in the House of Commons; having likewise in their own persons, recently and repeatedly filled the highest situations in the East India Direction; it was obvious, must be resorted to as guides, on account of their local knowledge and experience in the Company's concerns. No measures could have been more ably concerted, for bringing under Ministerial influence, and for permanently retaining under their subjection, the immense patronage, and all the sources of power, or of emolument, connected with India: while, on the other hand, it was well understood that the first Employments, civil and military, from the post of Governor General of Bengal, or Commander in Chief at Calcutta, down to the Seats in Council at Madras and at Bombay, were already promised or filled up, principally with Members of Parliament, distinguished for their adherence to Administration. The names of the individuals destined for these

high situations, became circulated in every company; and as many of them were better known among the Club at Brookes's, than in Leadenhall Street; the consciousness of all India being speedily subjected to their rapacious hands, by no means tended to reconcile, or to tranquillize the public mind.

December.] Fox himself gave indeed the strongest indication of his own apprehensions, from the operation of time, or from the interposition of delay, by the haste, not to say the precipitation, with which he propelled the Bill through the House of Commons. Notwithstanding the Opposition given to it in every stage, by Mr. Pitt and his friends; in defiance of petitions presented from the Proprietors, as well as from the Directors, of the East India Company; and equally contrary to the general sentiment of the Capital, no less than the almost unanimous voice of the Nation, which soon began to manifest itself; he pushed forward the measure with indecent ardor. Scarcely three Weeks elapsed, from the time of his moving for leave to bring in the Bill, on the 18th of November, to his appearance at the Bar of the House of Peers, on the 9th of December;

when he presented it in person, "*magna co-* "*mitante Caterva,*" after its having passed the House of Commons. An ordinary Turnpike, Canal, or Enclosure Bill, if opposed in its principles or progress, might have taken longer time, than did this gigantic experiment to render Administration in some measure independant of the Crown, and of the People. Yet, so well had the Secretary meditated his plan, such was the parliamentary strength possessed by the "Coalition," and such the ascendancy of Fox over the Lower House, that upon every Division, he carried the Question by a vast superiority of numbers, generally exceeding the proportion of two to one. On the Question of going into the Committee, which took place on the first of December, when 217 voted with Government, and only 103 against them; I quitted Lord North, whom I had commonly supported up to that time, and joined the Minority: conceiving it to be, upon every view of the subject, improper longer to adhere to a Minister, who seemed to have forsaken himself.

The consternation which Fox's Bill occasioned in Leadenhall Street, among that description of

men against whom its Provisions were known to be peculiarly levelled, was commonly, though erroneously, said to have proved fatal to Sir William James, who died very suddenly, just at this time. It is however true that he was siezed with an indisposition, while in the House of Commons, during the progress of the East India Bill, which compelled him instantly to return home; but he recovered in a certain degree the attack, though he never afterwards quitted his own House. His death took place instantaneously, during the performance of the Ceremony of his only daughter's Marriage with the late Lord Rancliff, then Mr. Boothby Parkyns. I knew Sir William James with great intimacy, and discussed with him, the probable results of the East India Measure, during the short interval which elapsed between his first seizure, and the day of his decease, at his Residence in Gerrard Street, Soho. His Origin was so obscure, as almost to baffle enquiry, and he had derived no advantage from Education; but he possessed strong natural Abilities, aided by a knowledge of Mankind. Having been sent out early in life, to Bombay, in the East India Company's Naval Service, he there distinguished himself, by commanding the

memorable Expedition undertaken against Angria the Pirate; when we made ourselves masters of Fort Geriah, his principal Establishment on the Coast of the Concan. Returning to his native country after this successful Enterprize, by which he acquired not only some Fortune, but considerable Reputation; he rose to the first Employments at the India House, as a Member of the Court of Directors; sat in successive Parliaments; was elevated by the friendship of the late Earl of Sandwich, when First Lord of the Admiralty, to the Baronetage; and had been elected Deputy Master of the Trinity House, in the preceding Month of June, when Lord Keppel was chosen Master of that Corporation. Those persons who asserted that Fox's Bill killed him, seem to have forgotten that he had nearly attained his Seventieth year, when he expired. As his dissolution took place on the 16th of December, he had not the satisfaction to witness the Rejection of that obnoxious Measure, by the House of Peers, which happened on the following day.

Never, probably, was so great a portion of intellect brought to bear upon one point or subject, in so short a space of time, as the

House of Commons exhibited between the opening of the East India Bill, and its triumphant Arrival in the Upper House of Parliament. All the sources of Argument, Declamation, Wit, and Pathos, were successively touched by master hands. Every species of information enlightened the object under discussion; nor was any weapon of Sophistry, Humour, or even severe Invective, left untried, which might operate on the understanding, passions, and feelings of the Audience. The salient points of Debate were so many, so striking, and so animated, as to defy the powers of memory; leaving on the hearer's mind, only a confused recollection of their beauty, delicacy, or severity. History, antient and modern, Poetry, Scripture, all were successively pressed into the service, or rendered subservient to the purposes of the contending parties. Will it be believed that the "Apocalypse" of St. John furnished images, which, by a slight effort of imagination, or by an immaterial deviation from the original Text, were made to typify Fox, under the form of "the Beast that rose up out of the Sea, having *seven* Heads?" Their application to the *seven* Commissioners appointed by the Bill, was at once so happy, and so natural, that it

could not be mistaken, and stood in need of no explanation. Mr. Scott, who now as Lord Eldon, holds the Great Seal, was the person by whom so curious an allusion was presented to the House. But, Sheridan, though he could not possibly anticipate an attack of such a nature, yet having contrived in the course of the Debate, to procure some Leaves of "the Book of Revelations," with admirable ability found materials in that Work, equally suited to Fox's Defence or Justification; transforming him from "the Dragon and the Beast," under both which Types he had been designated, to an Angelic Being, by producing other quotations from St. John, full as applicable to the Secretary of State.

The powers of mind exerted throughout the progress of the Bill, seemed to be concentrated in the memorable Debate that took place on the first of December, which was opened by Powis. His beautiful and severe animadversion on the double author of the Measure; a Metaphor drawn likewise from Holy Writ, made a strong impression. "I "hear indeed," said he, "the voice of Jacob," meaning Fox; "but the hands are "those of Esau." Lord North, who was

present at the time, though much indisposed, quitted the House in the course of the evening, overcome with the heat: he had however delivered his opinions with equal ability and energy, on the 27th of November, in an earlier stage of the business. Powis, who did not hesitate to denominate the Bill, "the "Modern Babel, which already almost reached "the Clouds;" and who compared Fox's treatment of the East India Company, with "Shylock's demand of a Pound of flesh, to be "cut nearest the Heart;" expressed nevertheless his personal respect for the Secretary; but added, that "he wished to see him the "Servant, not the Master, of his Sovereign." Burke, unable longer to observe silence after such reflexions, then rose; and in a Dissertation, rather than a Speech, which lasted more than three hours, exhausted all the powers of his mighty mind, in the justification of his friend's Measure. The most ignorant Member of the House, who had attended to the Mass of Information, Historical, Political, and Financial, which fell from the lips of Burke on that occasion, must have departed, rich in Knowledge of Indostan. It seemed impossible to croud greater variety of matter applicable to the subject, into a smaller compass; and those

who differed most widely from him in opinion, did not render the less justice to his gigantic range of ideas, his lucid exposition of events, and the harmonic flow of his periods. There were portions of this Harangue, in which he appeared to be animated by feelings and considerations the most benign, as well as elevated; and the Classic Language in which he made Fox's Panegyric, for having dared to venture on a Measure so beset with Dangers, but so pregnant, as he asserted, with Benefits to Mankind, could not be exceeded in Beauty.

But, however persuaded Burke himself might be, of the reality and truth of these predicted advantages which were to flow from the Bill of his friend, the moral effect of his own Speech, by no means kept pace with the admiration excited by his eloquence. From every quarter of the House the keenest shafts were aimed at the Measure; some of which penetrated deep, while others only appeared to graze on the surface; but, all left their impression. While Pitt, sustained by Mr. William Grenville, and Dundas, attacked it with the arms of reason; others tried the operation of irony and ridicule.

Arden, who soon afterwards became Solicitor General, on the change of Ministry, clung to it through every stage with great pertinacity and spirit, not unaccompanied by legal ability. The seven Commissioners, and their eight Assistant Directors, were compared by Mr. Wilberforce, to so many Doctors and Apothecaries, summoned for the purpose of putting the Patient, the East India Company, to death, according to the Rules of Art. Many Members, long accustomed to consider Fox as the Star by which they guided their political course, covered him on this occasion, with reproaches or maledictions. Mr. Martin, Member for Tewkesbury, a man, who though not distinguished by superior intellectual parts, yielded to none in probity, invoked Curses on the *Coalition*, as the Grave of all Principle. Wilkes, in a Speech of considerable length, acuteness, and severity, stigmatized the East India Bill; as "a Swindling Bill, drawn up to "obtain Money on false Pretences." Sir Richard Hill, to whom Scripture was familiar, compared the Secretary's conduct in affecting to protect and caress the East India Company, while he immolated them to his ambition, with the Treachery of Joab to Amasa, who at the moment that he pretended to embrace him,

stabbed him to the heart. In more homely language, destitute of adventitious ornament, Sir Cecil Wray declared that the measure impressed him with Horror from its Enormity, Corruption, and pernicious Consequences to the State. Some of the finest Passages of Shakespear, taken from his "Julius Cæsar," were applied by Scott and Arden, to Fox, with extraordinary effect. Jenkinson, temperately, but in language of energy, depictured the unconstitutional nature of the Power thus attempted to be set up, which must prove subversive of the Royal Prerogative; and from opposite sides, Fox was assailed as the Enemy of his Country, who sacrificed to his insatiable Ambition, the Fame, the Character, and the Consideration, that he had attained by a long series of public Services.

Not that he by any means wanted Defenders distinguished for integrity, as well as for legal and parliamentary ability. Mr. Erskine, who like Mr. Scott, has since attained to the highest honors and dignities of the Bar; first spoke, as a Member of the House of Commons, in support of this obnoxious Measure. His enemies pronounced the performance tame, and desti-

tute of the animation, which so powerfully characterized his Speeches in Westminster Hall. They maintained that, however resplendent he appeared as an Advocate, while addressing a Jury, he fell to the level of an ordinary man, if not below it, when seated on the Ministerial Bench; where another species of Oratory was demanded to impress Conviction, or to extort Admiration. To me, who having never witnessed his jurisprudential talents, could not make any such comparison, he appeared to exhibit shining powers of declamation. Lee, the Attorney General, in a Speech replete with that coarse, strong, and illiberal species of invective which usually accompanied his Addresses to the House; and which always appeared to me, more befitting the Robinhood Society, than accommodated to a Legislative Assembly; treated with indignant contempt, the repugnance manifested to violate the Charter of the East India Company. He did not even hesitate to describe that Charter, esteemed by many Members so sacred, and incapable of subversion except by arbitrary violence, as "a mere Skin of Parchment, to "which was appended a Seal of Wax." This imprudent, if not censurable Declaration, however qualified or palliated by subsequent

Explanations, operated injuriously to Ministers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, irritated at the severe animadversions made by Mr. Thomas Pitt, on the Rapacity with which Administration, after having seized on the Reins of Government, were now dealing a Death Blow to the Constitution of their Country; denied the Charge with much indignation. His Eloquence fell however far short of his Feelings, and was addressed rather to the moral Sense of his Auditors, than it appealed to their Judgment.

General Burgoyne, arriving Post from Ireland, spontaneously, as he asserted; and quitting the meaner Duties of Commander-in-Chief, which Employment he held in that Kingdom, in order to fulfil his higher Obligations as a Legislator at Westminster; spoke warmly in favour of the Bill. Having, many Years earlier, acted as Chairman of one of the first Committees appointed by the House, for enquiring into the Affairs of the East, he was heard with Attention. He confirmed all the Horrors and Enormities attributed by Burke, to the Europeans who governed Asia: Atrocities, which the General illustrated by a Citation prepared for the purpose, extracted

from the Sixth Æneid of Virgil, descriptive of the Guilt of a powerful Criminal, such as Hastings might be esteemed, condemned for his Crimes on Earth, to the pains of Tartarus. Rigby, professing an equal Contempt for Quotations from Shakespear, or from Milton, and expressing his Admiration at hearing Scripture fall from the lips of a Lawyer; with none of which Materials for Debate, he said, that he came provided; yet professed to have furnished himself with some Arguments applicable to the Subject under Discussion. Without Circumlocution, or any false Scruples of fastidious Delicacy, he declared his utter Disregard of the chartered Rights of the Company, which he said he considered "as a "Bugbear, only fit to intimidate Children." He even advised their Violation, as the primary Step to all Reform in the Administration of India.

No Individual distinguished himself more throughout the whole Progress of these interesting Proceedings, than Sheridan; whose matchless Endowments of Mind, equally adapted to Contests of Wit or of Argument, and ever under the controul of imperturbable Temper, enabled him to extend invaluable

Assistance to the Minister. But, neither was Fox wanting to himself, or to his Friends. On the contrary, performing every Function of a General and of a private Soldier; combating in the front Ranks; leaving no Charge unrepelled, no Insinuation unnoticed, no Argument unrefuted; he filled with Astonishment, as well as with Admiration, even those who thought themselves best able to appreciate the Magnitude and Extent of his parliamentary Talents. After defending his Bill from the severe Attacks of Pitt, he did not disdain or omit to answer the Allegations made by various Members of inferior weight. To Powis, to Scott, to Dundas, and even to Martin, he directed the most pointed Replies, calculated to justify him, not only as a Minister, but in his individual and moral Capacity. Determined on carrying through the Bill, without a Moment's delay; apprehensive of new Obstacles arising, every hour, within, as well as without the walls of the House; and seeming to regard Parliament as convoked, not for the purpose of Deliberation, but of Decision; he refused to postpone the Measure, even for a single Night. Vainly Scott adjured him, in the language of Desdemona to Othello, "Kill me not

"to-night, my Lord! let me live but one "day!" The Secretary never relaxed his Exertions, till, having surmounted all Opposition, he carried up the Bill, accompanied by a vast Number of his Adherents, who participated in his Success, to the Bar of the House of Peers. Its passage through that Assembly being already secured, as he justly conceived, on solid Grounds, the Measure seemed apparently to be placed beyond the reach of Fortune.

But with the Arrival of the East India Bill in the House of Lords, terminated nevertheless the prosperous Career of Ministers. The King, whose Opinions and Wishes, however they might have been suspected by, or even known to a few, were not as yet publickly divulged, or ascertained; now coming forward, as the Urgency of the Occasion seemed to demand, communicated through authentic Channels, his utter Disapprobation of the Measure. Lord Temple, though one of the first Individuals thus authorized, formed by no means the sole or exclusive Medium through which the Royal Pleasure was so signified and circulated. Very little Time, in fact, remained to the Sovereign, if he desired to avert the

impending Misfortune. For, the Secretary of State, who seems to have been well aware that as soon as the Measure was felt and understood, it would excite universal Alarm; had betimes secured such a Majority in the Upper House, as must speedily have left to the Crown no possible Means of Relief, except one scarcely known to the British Constitution since the Revolution of 1688; namely, a Refusal of the Royal Assent to the Bill, after its passage through both Houses of Parliament. In this critical Juncture, His Majesty caused such Arguments or Expostulations to be offered to many Members of the House of Lords, Spiritual, as well as Temporal; and the Necessity of Resistance was so strongly depictured by his Emissaries, as to overturn all Fox's Machinery in an instant. Proxies given to the Minister were suddenly revoked; and after first leaving the Administration in a Minority of Eight, upon the Question of Adjournment; the Bill itself was subsequently rejected two Days later, on the 17th of December, by Nineteen votes. One hundred and seventy-one Peers voted on the Occasion, either in Person or by Proxy; a prodigious Attendance, if we consider the limited Numbers of the Peerage at that Time.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and of York led the way, though the former Prelate, whose Connections, political and matrimonial, seemed to connect him with the "Coalition," had been previously regarded as a firm Supporter of the Measure. Nor can it excite Surprize, that all those noble Individuals without Exception, who occupied Situations in the Royal Household, or near the King's person, should, without fastidiously hesitating, give the example of tergiversation. They abandoned Ministers, and joined the Crown; manifesting by their Votes, how vast is the personal influence of the Sovereign, when strenuously exerted, over the Members of the Upper House of Parliament. The Prince of Wales, who, when it was moved to adjourn on the 15th, had voted in person with the Administration; having received a notification of his Father's disapprobation of the East India Bill, absented himself on the second Division, when that measure was finally rejected. Lord Rivers, one of the Lords of the King's Bedchamber, who had given his vote by proxy to the "Coalition," on the first Question, withdrew it on the second Division; as did the Earls of Hardwicke and Egremont. Lord Stormont,

though as being a Member of the Cabinet and President of the Council, he had personally supported the Bill on the 15th, yet voted on the other side, forty-eight hours afterwards. His uncle, the Earl of Mansfield, who was supposed to have influenced him in this determination, exhibited the same example. Both were present in the first Division, as supporters of the Measure; and both appeared in the House as enemies to it, when thrown out on 17th of December. The Earl of Oxford, one of His Majesty's most antient servants, who had been near his person more than twenty years, in the capacity of a Lord of the Bedchamber; having been induced to support the "Coalition" by his Proxy on the 15th, sent it to the opposite Side, on the subsequent Division. Fox and Burke, together with many of their warmest Adherents, who during the progress of the first Debate had remained on the steps of the Throne, in order by their Presence to encourage their Friends in the Upper House, had the Mortification to witness the Defeat experienced on that Evening; a Defeat which served as a Warning of its final Destiny.

The Debates which took place in the upper

House, on the two questions of Adjournment and of Rejection; however inferior an interest they excited, when compared with the discussions that agitated the House of Commons on the same subject; yet strongly arrested national attention. Lord Thurlow, after reprobating the Bill, and treating with contemptuous ridicule the Reports of the "Select Committee," on which defective or erroneous foundations the pretended necessity for the measure rested; declared that "if it passed, the King would in fact take "the Diadem from his own head, and place "it on the head of Mr. Fox." In more intemperate language, scarcely befitting so dignified an Assembly, the Earl of Abingdon, a Nobleman of very eccentric character, restrained by no forms in expressing his abhorrence of a Coalition which had given birth to this political monster; qualified Charles James Fox by name, as "a Mounte-"bank Secretary of State, accustomed for-"merly to ascend the Stages at Covent Gar-"den and at Westminster Hall, from which "he harangued the mob; but now calling "himself the Minister of the People, though "animated by the criminal ambition of Crom-"well, and aiming at regal power." He even

accused the Secretary with exceeding in violence, by his seizure of the East India Company's Charter, the worst acts of those Tyrants, Charles the Second, and his brother James. With great pertinacity, the Duke of Richmond pointed out the injustice of the Measure: nor did the ties of Consanguinity that connected him with Fox, prevent him from severely arraigning the recent grant of a Pension of one thousand Pounds a year made to Sir William Gordon; in order, by vacating his Seat for Portsmouth, to enable Government to introduce Mr. Erskine into the House of Commons, at this critical juncture. Unsolicited, and unconnected with party, Lord Camden entered his strong Protest against such an infraction of all law, by bringing forward an Act, not of regulation, but of rapacious confiscation.

Ministers, thus assailed, if they exhibited the talents, by no means displayed the energies, exerted by their opponents. Lord Loughborough, on whom devolved the principal weight of defending the Government, found himself ill supported in that attempt. The Speaker, Lord Mansfield, voted indeed with Administration on the question of Adjournment; but

remained altogether silent, and extended no active assistance. Conscious that his Colleagues had lost the confidence of the King, the Duke of Portland alluded with warmth, in the course of Debate, to Lord Temple's recent Audience of the Sovereign, which he denounced as a violation of the Constitution. But, that Nobleman, avowing the fact, and justifying it as the privilege of an hereditary Counsellor of the Crown, to offer advice, called on the Duke to bring forward against him a specific Charge. Lord Shelburne, though he once, I believe, attended in his place, took no part whatever in the discussions, nor ever voted on the Question, either in person or by proxy: a line of conduct, which, when we consider that he had been expelled from power by the "Coalition," only a few Months earlier, opened a wide field for political speculation, on the motives of his silence or secession.

It will be readily admitted, that if we try the conduct of George the Third, in personally interposing to influence the Debates, and to render himself master of the deliberations of the upper House, by the spirit of our Constitution, as fixed since the expulsion of

James the Second; it appears subversive of every principle of political Freedom. Such an ill-timed and imprudent interference, had in fact laid the foundation of all the misfortunes of Charles the First. But, the same line of conduct, which in 1641 excited indignation, in 1783 awakened no sentiment of national condemnation. On the contrary, the King's position being perfectly understood, the impossibility of his extrication from the Ministerial toils, appeared so clearly demonstrated, unless by a decided personal effort to arrest the Bill, that the Country at large affixed its sanction to the act. There were, nevertheless, it must be admitted, many individuals who thought that the royal disapprobation should have been earlier signified; and who inclined to accuse the King of something like duplicity or deception, in his treatment of Administration. We must however candidly allow, that he was not bound to observe any measures of scrupulous delicacy, with men who had entered his Cabinet by violence, who held him in Bondage, and who meditated to render that Bondage perpetual. Nor was it easy for him to discover and to detect, by the force of his own intellect, without legal assistance, the

invasions on his independence and Prerogative, contained in the provisions of the Bill, as originally submitted to him; till they were exposed and made manifest by the discussions that took place in the House of Commons. The rapidity with which it was carried up to the Peers, and the little delay which Fox evidently meant it should there undergo, before it was presented for his concurrence, left him no option, and very little time for action. These reasons exculpated and justified an interference, apparently so irreconcilable with the genius of the British Constitution. A fact not generally known, but not the less true, is, that His Majesty was advised, and had taken the resolution, if the Bill had actually passed the House of Lords, to have refused to it the Royal Assent. He would then have instantly changed his Ministers, dissolved the Parliament, and thrown himself for protection upon his People. Those who have had the best opportunities of knowing his Character, and his firmness under the most alarming or distressful circumstances, while sustained by the conviction of acting right; will not doubt, or disbelieve the fact. Nor would the Nation, probably, have condemned his conduct, or have delivered him up again into

the hands of the "Coalition." Happily however, the middle line which he adopted, prevented the necessity of recurring to such painful extremities.

17th December.] Though Fox's Bill was thus rejected by the Upper House, he still remained, together with Lord North, in possession of their respective Offices, no change whatever in Administration having yet taken place. Fox even delivered, as Secretary of State, from the Treasury Bench, the most bitter and animated Philippic ever pronounced within the walls of the House of Commons; in the course of which, he dealt out every accusation against the Sovereign, and those Members of the House of Peers; the Prætorian Bands, or rather the *Janizaries*, as he denominated them; who had strangled the Measure by their Sultan's order. Nor did he hesitate to compare the paper entrusted by His Majesty to Lord Temple, which had operated such injurious effects to the Administration, with the Rescript of Tiberius sent to the Roman Senate from Caprœa, for the condemnation of Sejanus, unheard in his defence, and without proofs of his guilt. In classic language, and in the words of Juvenal, he

reprobated such an interference, as wholly subversive of the British Constitution.

Vainly, however, Mr. Pitt urged him to retire, and thus to anticipate his dismission from Employment. Content with rendering the Majority of the House subservient to his views, by passing various Resolutions, calculated to stigmatize, as destructive of the Constitution, the late interference of the Crown; and intended at the same time to prevent the interruption of their Deliberations, by any act of Prerogative; the "Coalition" Ministers refused to give in their resignation. Under these circumstances, which called for decision, the King displayed no irresolution. Conscious that he had advanced too far to recede, either with honor or with benefit, he passed the whole of the 18th of December, in making dispositions for the formation of a new Cabinet; and finding, at a late hour of the Evening, that the two Secretaries of State still declined to resign, he signified to them, by a messenger, that he had no further occasion for their services. They received at the same time information, that a personal interview would be disagreeable to him, and were ordered to deliver up the Seals of their respec-

tive Departments, through the medium of the two under Secretaries, Fraser and Nepean. Mr. Fox immediately complied; but Lord North having deposited the Seal of his Office in the hands of his son, Colonel North, one of his under Secretaries, who could no where be found for a considerable time; the King waited patiently at St. James's till it should be brought to him. Mr. Pollock, first Clerk in Lord North's Office, who had already retired to rest, being called out of his Bed, in consequence of the requisition from His Majesty, went in search of Colonel North. After a long delay, he was found, and produced the Seal; which being brought to the King about one o'clock in the Morning, he delivered it into Lord Temple's hands, and then returned to the Queen's House.

19th December.] On the ensuing Day, it being indispensable to form a Government with the least possible delay, Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding his youth, was placed at the Head of the New Cabinet, as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer; an instance without precedent in our Annals, and which will probably never be again realized! Lord Bolingbroke, then Mr.

St. John, had indeed, under Queen Anne been made Secretary at War, as early in life; and we have since seen Lord Henry Petty, now Marquis of Lansdown, at about the same Age, raised to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, in 1806, after Mr. Pitt's decease. But there is a wide interval, from either of the above examples, to the elevation before us. If we reflect likewise on the decided majority against which Pitt had to contend in the House of Commons, conducted by such energies and talents as Fox possessed; we may be tempted, at first sight, to accuse him of imprudence and temerity. The event nevertheless proved, that in accepting Employment, under all the disadvantages here enumerated, he had maturely weighed the peril and the consequences. Other impediments, not less serious, presented themselves in the interior of the Cabinet recently formed; where Lord Temple insisted on the immediate Dissolution of Parliament, as necessary to their ministerial, if not even to their personal, preservation. But Pitt, with consummate judgment, while he retained in his own hands so powerful an engine, which he held suspended over the House of Commons, abstained from using it till the progress of affairs should justify the in-

terposition. Conscious that no act of the Royal Prerogative could be more generally repugnant to the inclinations of the Members of the Lower House, than a Dissolution before they had sat half the period for which they had been elected, he resisted Lord Temple's proposition; who, in consequence immediately resigned, only three days after his Appointment: thus involving the half-formed Administration in confusion and embarrassment, not wholly exempt even from some degree of ridicule and of danger. Never did any Ministry commence its career under a more inauspicious and apparently desperate predicament, which was destined so long to retain possession of the Reins of Government.

22d December.] Even after Lord Temple's Resignation, when the Cabinet was at length completed, Pitt might be said to constitute its whole strength in one House, as Lord Thurlow equally did in the other Assembly. The Great Seal was entrusted to the latter, for the fourth time under the Reign of George the Third. Lord Gower, made President of the Council, and the Duke of Rutland appointed Privy Seal, brought indeed a considerable accession of Parliamentary interest and connexions; but, a

very scanty addition of eloquence or of talents. The new Secretaries of State, Lord Sydney, and the Marquis of Carmarthen, even if their Abilities had been of the most brilliant description, yet were both Members of the House of Peers; a disadvantage only to be surmounted by Pitt's taking on himself the whole weight of Business in the House of Commons, and uniting in some measure in his own person, the Defence of every Department. Lord Howe, restored to the Admiralty, was re-admitted into the Cabinet; and the Duke of Richmond returned to the Ordnance: but no mention was ever made of Lord Shelburne for any place in the Administration. He seemed to be extinct in the public recollection.

Sir George Howard obtained the Command of the Forces; but, neither he, nor the Duke of Richmond, were taken into the Cabinet. The new Commander-in-Chief, who had long been decorated with the Order of the *Bath*, was a man universally esteemed, highly bred, and a gallant Soldier: but, like Sir John Irwin, of whom I have had occasion to speak, he owed his military Elevation and Employments, more perhaps to Royal favor, than to any distinguished talents, or pro-

fessional Services. His descent from, or alliance with the Duke of Norfolk, notwithstanding the evidence of his Name, was, I believe, not established on incontestable grounds. He attained, as did General Conway, not many years afterwards, to the rank of Field Marshal; a Dignity of which the British service had antecedently furnished only a few examples. For the Embassy to Paris, the Duke of Dorset was selected. As he honored me with his friendship down to the close of his life, it may be naturally expected that I should say a few words respecting him. He was the son of Lord John Sackville, elder Brother of Lord George; and succeeded collaterally to the Title, on the Demise of his uncle, Charles, second Duke of Dorset, mentioned so frequently in "Dodington's Diary," as Earl of Middlesex. The Duke, when named Embassador to Versailles, had nearly attained his fortieth year. His person was highly agreeable; his manners soft, quiet, ingratiating, and formed for a Court; destitute of all Affectation, but not deficient in Dignity. He displayed indeed, neither shining parts, nor superior Abilities. Yet, as he possessed good sense, matured by knowledge of the world, had travelled over a considerable

part of Europe, and had improved his understanding by an extensive acquaintance with mankind, he was well calculated for such a Mission. He nourished a strong passion for all the Fine Arts, and a predilection for men of Talents and Artists; a taste which he indulged, and in the gratification of which, he manifested that he inherited some of the qualities of his Ancestor, Charles, Earl of Dorset. But the Mediocrity of his Estate, when contrasted with his high Rank, imposed limits on the liberality of his disposition. If considered as Embassador to France, though he could not sustain a comparison for Diplomatic Ability, with the Earl of Stair, or with the first Horace Walpole, who had represented the English Sovereign, at the Courts of Louis the Fourteenth and Fifteenth; he might at least be regarded as equal to any of the Noblemen who had filled that Office during the last years of George the Second, or under the Reign of George the Third, if we except, perhaps, Lord Stormont. To Marie Antoinette, the French Queen, the Duke of Dorset rendered himself highly acceptable, and enjoyed some degree of her personal favor: a circumstance by no means unessential in his situation, as that Princess performed a much more im-

portant part in the Cabinet and Councils of Louis the Sixteenth, than the two Queens her immediate predecessors. Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip the Fourth, King of Spain, who espoused Louis the Fourteenth; and Maria Leczinska, Consort of his Successor, possessed no political power or interest. Marie Antoinette's protection, aided by his connexion with the Polignacs, had sufficed to procure for the Count d'Adhemar, at the conclusion of Peace, the Embassy to the Court of England: but he was a Man far inferior in every accomplishment of mind and of manners, to the Duke of Dorset.

Mr. Arden became Solicitor General. Nature has seldom cast a human Being in a less elegant or pleasing mould. Even Dunning's person would have gained by a comparison with Arden. Nor were his legal talents more conspicuous in the general estimation of the Bar. But, his early acquaintance with Pitt, which time had matured into friendship, covered or concealed every deficiency. That powerful protection, in defiance of Lord Thurlow's avowed dislike, conducted the new Solicitor General rapidly to the Honors and Dignities of the Law; finally placing him, where almost all those individuals

patronized by the Minister, found their ultimate repose, in the House of Peers. It must however be admitted, that no man in Parliament had given a more pertinacious and unremitting opposition to Fox's East India Bill, than Arden. The last Blow aimed at it, before it passed the Lower House, came from his lips. For, I recollect, that after that obnoxious Measure had been carried, on the Third Reading, by a Majority of more than two to one; the Solicitor General, Mansfield, having risen to move for leave to bring up a Clause, declaring it to be a *Public Bill;* Arden exclaimed, that "he had no objection: but, "that he was not surprized at its having es-"caped his learned friend's memory, as every "other person considered the Bill to be a "*Private Job.*" With that Stigma impressed on the Measure, Fox bore it in triumph, to the Bar of the Lords.

The King's Table, covered with Badges of Office, Seals, Wands, and Gold Sticks, profusely given in by the Adherents of the dismissed Ministers, presented an extraordinary Spectacle. Among the foremost to testify his Ministerial fidelity, the Honorable Charles Greville, next brother to the Earl of Warwick,

resigned his Office of Treasurer of the Household. Possessing, like his uncle, Sir William Hamilton, an elegant mind, and a taste for many branches of the Fine Arts, which pursuit had carried him into expences beyond the bounds of severe prudence; his Resignation of such an Employment could not therefore be to him in any sense, a matter of indifference. I have heard Mr. Greville, whom I very particularly knew, often say, that the King most kindly expostulated with him, when he entered the Closet to lay down his Place, and urged him by no means to commit an act so unnecessary; the Treasurership of the Household being, not a Ministerial, but a personal situation in the family of the Sovereign. I ought likewise to add that Fox, who well knew Mr. Greville's private Embarrassments, had, with a liberality of mind truly noble, exhorted him to retain his Post; absolving him at the same time from all considerations of a political kind. But, his feelings of honor were too delicate, to permit of his following either the suggestions of convenience, the exhortations of Fox, or the expostulations of his Sovereign. He retired for several years from Court, and from public life, into comparative obscurity.

Lord Hinchingbrook, less scrupulous, and with better sense, instead of quitting his Office of Master of the Buck Hounds; though his father, the Earl of Sandwich, followed the fortunes of the "Coalition;" wisely abandoned that Party, and declined to give in his Resignation. Sir George Yonge went back to his Office of Secretary at War, which he had held under Lord Shelburne's Administration; a Post that seemed to be Hereditary in his family; his father, Sir William Yonge, having occupied it with much distinction, under the Reign of George the Second. Sir William, who performed no inconsiderable part in the Political Annals of that Period, was equally distinguished likewise among the men of Wit and Gallantry. I have heard Lord Sackville, who remembered him, say, that Sir William Yonge, when Secretary at War, having waited officially on John, Duke of Argyle, then Commander-in-chief of the Forces, to make his Report on a matter of Business; the Duke kept him standing, while he himself remained seated for a considerable time. Their Ministerial Conference being ended, he requested Sir William to take a Chair. "No, Sir," replied he, "if the Secretary at War is not

"worthy to sit down in the presence of the "Commander-in-chief; it would be altogether unbecoming Sir William Yonge, to "be seated in company with the Duke of "Argyle." So saying, he quitted the room. Sir George Yonge did not want talents, and he maintained his place in a Debate; but in ability he by no means equalled his father.

Meanwhile Fox, who remained completely Master of the House of Commons, where Mr. Pitt could not even be personally present during the Time necessary for his Re-election, in consequence of having vacated his Seat for Appleby; might be said to sway with absolute Power, the Deliberations of that Assembly. His first Cares were directed to prevent either a Prorogation or a Dissolution of Parliament, by passing Resolutions calculated to render each of those Proceedings, difficult and dangerous to Ministers. Having carried his Motion by a large Majority, he consented to pass the Land-Tax Bill: but, no Assurances given by Mr. Dundas from the Treasury Bench, though confirmed by Mr. Bankes, as the Friend and Representative of the new First Minister, declaring in his Name, and by his Authority,

that he would neither advise such an Act of Prerogative, nor would continue in Office, if the Crown had Recourse to it; could prevail on Fox to allow of an Adjournment for the Christmas Recess, till he had voted, without a Division, an Address to the Throne, of the most criminating Nature, which was ordered to be presented by the whole House. On receiving the King's Answer, which, though gracious and conciliating, did not breathe the less Determination; after passing upon it the most severe Comments, as a Mixture of Duplicity and Ambiguity, Fox then permitted of an Adjournment for the short period of Sixteen Days; an interval indispensably requisite to complete the Ministerial Arrangements. The Resignation or Dismission of the new Administration, was however confidently anticipated by the Party, and announced by Fox himself in one of his Speeches, when he ventured to predict, that its Duration could not possibly exceed a few Weeks. The most experienced Members among them, with Welbore Ellis at their Head, joined in this Opinion; which, it must be confessed, was built upon all the Precedents known since the Elevation of the House of Hanover to the Throne.

Lord North, who had been absent from the effect of Indisposition, during a great part of the Debates, while the East India Bill was in its progress through the House of Commons; made ample Compensation for his short and involuntary Retreat, by his Presence and Exertions after the Dismission of Ministers. During the number of Years that I sat with him in Parliament, I never witnessed a more brilliant Exhibition of his Powers, than on the 22d of December, when Erskine moved for an Address to the Throne, deprecating a Dissolution. In the commencement of his Speech, Lord North justified by cogent Arguments, his Union with Fox, as having been dictated by State Necessity and Utility; eulogizing in animated Language, the Virtues, no less than the Abilities, of his late Colleague, whom he wished in future always to be designated as his "Right Honorable Friend." Then, after severely arraigning the Mode of Pitt's Admission into the Cabinet, he diverged with inconceivable Humour into the path of Ridicule, so analogous to his formation of Mind. Alluding to the Wish expressed more than once by Mr. Martin, that a Starling should be perched on the Speaker's Chair,

who might incessantly repeat the Words, " Cursed *Coalition!*" he observed, that so long as an honorable Member of that House, " continued to pronounce those Sounds, as " if by Rote, and without any fixed Idea, " let what would be the Subject of Debate; " he conceived the Starling to be unneces-" sary, inasmuch as the Gentleman would " make just as great an Impression as the " Bird, on his hearers." Having convulsed the House with Laughter by this Remark, he compared, or rather he contrasted, the Conduct of the two Men who were shut up in the Eddystone Lighthouse, during six Weeks, with the opposite Line of Action embraced by Fox and himself. " Those Men," said he, " from reciprocal Enmity, preferred " letting the Fire go out, and beholding the " Navy of England dashed to pieces, rather " than lend each other any Assistance. But " we, animated by other and more enlarged " Sentiments, considered the Preservation of " the Vessel of State, our primary Duty; " and we agreed, that at all Events, the " Fire in the Lighthouse should not be ex-" tinguished." An allusion so ingenious as well as felicitous, almost electrified his Audience; and if Wit could have supported or

restored the "Coalition," it must have overborne every Impediment. But, the moral Impression made on the public Mind, to their Disadvantage, daily acquired Strength, and finally compleated their Downfall, though protracted for more than Three Months, by various circumstances.

If the struggle for Power had lain only between Pitt and Fox, the former of whom, whatever might be the extent of his Talents, was unable to command a Majority upon any Question in the House of Commons, while the latter carried every Motion; the Contest would, no doubt, have been soon decided. Or, had the Dispute been, as under Charles the First, between the Sovereign, claiming to exercise Prerogatives antiquated and oppressive on the one Hand; and the representative Body on the other, propelled and sustained by the People, as their Organs and Protectors against arbitrary Violence; — the Termination might have been foreseen without much Penetration. But Fox, though he was become by his union with Lord North, Master of the Deliberations of the Lower House, had sacrificed to that very Union, in a considerable degree, the good Opinion of

the Country; and the remains of his former Popularity which survived his Coalition with Lord North, had since been shipwrecked in the India Bill. He had therefore imprudently, though as it would nevertheless seem, reflectively, engaged in a Conflict, where the Crown and the Nation both combined against him. Without the aid of the People, the Sovereign would, indeed, have been powerless. As little could the House of Peers, unsupported by the public Voice, have checked his career. It was their Union which became irresistable. Fox, who, whatever his Admirers may assert, possessed more Talent than Judgment; does not appear to have deeply weighed and appreciated these Facts, before he entered the Lists. Unfortunately for him too, the Champion wanted by the Crown, for the Conjuncture, presented himself in Pitt. His Name, rendered illustrious by his Father; the Decorum of his Manners, so opposed to those of Fox; even his very Youth seemed to recommend him to National Favor. The King availed himself of these Aids, to overwhelm the "Coalition" under the ruins of the Fortress which they had constructed, and deemed inassailable. Only Time was still wanting, in order to awaken

and to animate the Nation at large; which, not yet fully informed upon all the Points of Fox's Bill, required to be roused into Exertion, before the last Address should be made to them as Electors. Pitt, with a Judgment beyond his Years, instead of prematurely dissolving the House of Commons, as a Man of meaner talents would have done; undertook the experiment of endeavouring first to conciliate, or to convince, the Majority; thus allowing the popular sentiment full leisure to expand, and finally to overpower all resistance: while he reserved for the proper moment, whenever it should be fully matured, his final appeal to the Country, by a Dissolution. Such was the real state of Affairs in the last Days of December, 1783, at the time when Pitt, contrary to all Precedent, and under apparent difficulties the most insurmountable, ventured to accept the Reins of Government.

It forms an object of the most natural Curiosity, minutely to survey him at this critical period of his life. He was not then much more than twenty-four years and a half old, and consequently had not attained the Age, at which many individuals, under the testamentary dispositions of their parents, are

still legally considered to be in a state of tutelage or minority. In the formation of his person he was tall and slender, but without elegance or grace. His Countenance, taken as a whole, did not display either the fine expression of character, or the intellect of Fox's face, on every feature of which, his mind was more or less forcibly depictured. It was not till Pitt's Eye lent animation to his other features, which were in themselves tame, that they lighted up, and became strongly intelligent. Fox, even when quiescent, could not be mistaken for an ordinary man. In his manners, Pitt,* if not repulsive, was cold, stiff, and without suavity or amenity. He seemed never to invite approach, or to encourage acquaintance; though, when addressed, he could be polite, communicative, and occasionally gracious. Smiles were not natural to him, even when seated on the Treasury Bench; where, placed at the summit of power, young, surrounded by followers, admirers, and flatterers, he maintained a more sullen gravity than his Antagonist exhibited, who beheld around him only the companions of his political exile, poverty, and privations. From the instant that Pitt entered the door-

way of the House of Commons, he advanced up the floor with a quick and firm step, his Head erect and thrown back, looking neither to the right nor to the left; nor favouring with a nod or a glance, any of the individuals seated on either side, among whom many who possessed five thousand a year, would have been gratified even by so slight a mark of attention. It was not thus that Lord North or Fox treated Parliament; nor from them, would Parliament have so patiently endured it: but Pitt seemed made to command, even more than to persuade or to convince, the Assembly that he addressed.

In the flower of youth when he was placed at the head of Administration, he manifested none of the characteristic virtues or defects usually accompanying that period of life. Charles the Twelfth, King of Sweden, could not have exhibited more coldness, indifference, or apathy towards women; a point of his character on which his enemies dwelt with malignant, though impotent, satisfaction: while his friends laboured with equal pertinacity to repel the imputation. To him the Opposition applied, as had been done to his Fa-

ther, the description given of a Roman youth:

> "Multa tulit, fecitque *Puer*; sudavit et alsit;
> "Abstinuit Venere" ——

In order to justify him from such a supposed blank in his formation, his Adherents whispered, that he was no more chaste than other men, though more decorous in his pleasures; and they asserted that he made frequent visits to a female of distinguished charms, who resided on the other side of Westminster Bridge: but I never could learn from any of them her name or abode. Pitt's apparent insensibility towards the other sex, and his chastity, formed indeed, one of the subjects on which the Minority exhausted their wit, or rather their malevolence; as if it had been necessary that the First Minister of George the Third should be, like the Chancellor of Charles the Second, "the "greatest libertine in his Dominions." I recollect, soon after Pitt became confirmed in power, his detaining the House of Commons from the Business of the Day during a short time, while he went up to the House of Lords; and as Mrs. Siddons was to perform the part of "Belvidera" that Evening, when Fox never

failed, if possible, to attend in the Orchestra at Drury Lane, the Opposition impatiently expected Pitt's return, in order to propose an Adjournment. As soon as the Door opened and he made his appearance, one of them, a man of a classic mind, exclaimed,

"Jam redit et *Virgo!*"

If, however, the Minister viewed Women with indifference, he was no enemy to Wine, nor to the social conviviality of the table. His Constitution, in which a latent and hereditary Gout early displayed itself; which Disorder, heightened by political distress, domestic and foreign, carried him off at forty-seven; always demanded the aid and stimulus of the Grape. It was not therefore in him, so much a gratification or an indulgence, as a physical want, though he unquestionably yielded to its seductions, without making any great effort at resistance; resembling in this respect, a distinguished Consular Character of Antiquity, relative to whose virtue Horace says,

"Narratur et Prisci Catonis,
"Sæpe Mero caluisse Virtus."

In the autumn of 1784, he had indeed nearly

fallen a victim to one of those festive meetings, at which no severe renunciations were enjoined by the Host, or practised by the Guests. Returning by way of frolic, very late at night, on horseback, to Wimbledon, from Addiscombe, the seat of Mr. Jenkinson, near Croydon, where the party had dined; Lord Thurlow, then Chancellor, Pitt, and Dundas, found the Turnpike Gate situate between Tooting and Streatham, thrown open. Being elevated above their usual prudence, and having no Servant near them, they passed through the Gate at a brisk pace, without stopping to pay the Toll; regardless of the remonstrances or threats of the Turnpike Man, who running after them, and believing them to belong to some Highwaymen, who had recently committed depredations on that road, discharged the contents of his Blunderbuss at their backs. Happily he did no injury. To this curious and narrow escape of the First Minister, which furnished matter of pleasantry, though perhaps not of rejoicing, to the Opposition, Allusion is made in the "Rolliad;"

"How as he wander'd darkling o'er the plain,
His reason lost in Jenkinson's Champaign,
A peasant's hand, but that just Fate withstood,
Had shed a Premier's, for a robber's blood."

Probably, no men in high Office, since Charles the Second's time, drank harder than Pitt's companions; as, in addition to the individuals already named, we should not omit the Duke of Rutland and Lord Gower, neither of whom professed mortification. Once, and once only, the House of Commons witnessed a deviation from strict Sobriety, in the Minister and the Treasurer of the Navy; who having come down after a repast, not of a Pythagorean description, found themselves unable to manage the Debate, or to reply to the arguments of the Minority, with their accustomed ability. No illiberal notice or advantage was however taken of this solitary act of indiscretion. The House broke up, and it sunk into oblivion. Fox never subjected himself, either in, or out of Office, to similar comments. He was always fresh; but, the Treasury Bench, under the Coalition Ministry, had not wanted some noble Advocates for the quick circulation of the Bottle.

Pitt, at his coming into Office, was soon surrounded by a chosen Phalanx of young men who participated in his triumph, pressed near him on a day of expected Debate, and constituted the resource of his leisure hours. Powis, when describing about this time, "the

"forces led by the Right Honourable Gentle-"man on the Treasury Bench," in his Speech of the 9th of March, 1784, only a few days previous to the Dissolution of Parliament; said, "The first may be called his Body Guard, "composed of light young troops, who shoot "their little Arrows with amazing dexterity, "against those who refuse to swear Allegiance "to their Chief." High Birth, personal devotion, and political connection, more than talents, formed the ordinary foundation of the Minister's partiality for those distinguished individuals; most of whom, with only one Exception, we have since seen elevated to the Peerage, or loaded with preferments and sinecure Appointments. In general, the Duke de Montausier's observation to Louis the Fourteenth, when speaking of Versailles, "*Vous avez beau "faire, Sire, vous n'en ferez jamais qu'un fa-"vori sans merite,*" might well apply to them. With Fox's associates and comrades, Hare, Fitzpatrick, and Sheridan, they could sustain no competition for mental endowments. Lord Grenville, then Mr. William Grenville, must not however be included in this Remark. His near connexion with the First Minister, by Consanguinity, when added to his distin-

guished Abilities, placed him on far higher ground.

In suavity of temper, magnanimity of disposition, and oblivion of injury or offence, Fox rose superior to Pitt. Even Dundas possessed more liberality of character, as he manifested on many occasions. I have heard Fox, after dealing out the severest insinuations or accusations against Lord North, when that Nobleman was at the head of the Treasury, towards the end of the American War; on being convinced that he had exceeded the fair limits of Parliamentary Attack, or had deviated into personal Abuse, explain, retract, and apologize for his violence or indecorum. Mr. Pitt, though he rarely committed such a breach of propriety, and was more measured in his censure or condemnation, seldom, if ever, made concession. He even tried at an early period of his Ministerial Career, to overbear Sheridan, by making sarcastic allusion to the theatrical employments or dramatic avocations of that eminent Member, as forming a more appropriate object of his attention than Parliamentary declamation and pursuits: Allusions, which however classic the language in which they were couched, might be justly

deemed illiberal in their nature. But, Sheridan, with admirable presence of mind, turned against him his own weapons; leaving behind him the impression of his genius, drawn from the very key on which Pitt had pressed, when he applied to the First Minister the denomination of the "Angry Boy," with which *Ben Johnson* furnished him on the instant.

In classic knowledge and acquirements of every kind, as drawn from Greek and Roman sources, Pitt and Fox might dispute for preeminence: but the latter left his rival far behind, in all the variety of elegant information derived from Modern History, Poetry, and Foreign Languages. We ought not, indeed, to be surprized at this superiority, if we recollect that Fox was above ten years older than Pitt; that he nourished a much stronger natural attachment to polite letters, and enjoyed infinitely more leisure for its indulgence. Pitt, as far as my means of information ever enabled me to form a judgment, possessed comparatively small general acquaintance with those Authors, which furnished the Libraries of Men of Taste and Science. How indeed, we may ask, should

he ever have attained it? Several months before he compleated his twenty second year, he found himself with a very slender fortune, placed in the House of Commons, which opened to his aspiring and ambitious mind, the most brilliant prospects of Elevation. From that period, if we except the Prorogation of 1781; —for in 1782, he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in 1783 he visited the Continent;—what portion of time could he devote to literary pursuits or accomplishment? Near seven years later than the period of which I speak, in the Autumn of the year 1790, when it was expected that a rupture would have taken place between the Crowns of Great Britain and Spain, respecting the affair of Nootka Sound; conversing with him on the subject of the Spanish Possessions lying along the Shore of the Pacific Ocean, he owned that he not only never had read, but, he assured me, he never had heard of Commodore Byron's Narrative of his Shipwreck in the "Wager," on the Coast of Patagonia: —a Book to be found in every Circulating Library. But, on the other hand, the rapidity and facility with which he acquired, digested, and converted to purposes of utility, his knowledge, was altogether wonder-

ful. With the French Language he was grammatically conversant; but, at twenty-five, he spoke it imperfectly, and wrote in it without freedom or facility, though he subsequently improved in these particulars. I repeat it, as a Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, he could have sustained no competition with Fox, in all the branches of solid, or of ornamental Attainment, that qualify for such a Situation.

It is not easy to decide relative to their respective superiority in Eloquence. Fox's Oratory was more impassioned: Pitt's could boast greater correctness of diction. The former exhibited, while speaking, all the Tribunitian rage: the latter displayed the Consular dignity. But, it must not be forgotten that the one commonly attacked, while the other generally defended; and it is more easy to impugn or to censure, than to justify, Measures of State. Had they changed positions in the House, the character of their Speeches would doubtless have taken a tinge, though it would not have been radically altered, by such a variation in their political Destiny. From Fox's finest specimens of Oratory, much, as it appeared to me, might have been taken away,

without injuring the effect, or maiming the conclusion. To Pitt's Speeches nothing seemed wanting, yet was there no redundancy. He seemed, as by intuition, to hit the precise point, where, having attained his object, as far as Eloquence could effect it, he sat down. This distinctive and opposite Characteristic of the two men, arose, partly at least, from an opinion or principle which Fox had adopted. He calculated, that one third of his Audience was always either absent, or at Dinner, or asleep; and he therefore usually made a short resumption or Epitome of his Arguments, for the benefit of this part of the Members. So that, after speaking at great length, and sometimes apparently summing up, as if about to conclude; whenever he saw a considerable influx of Attendance, he began anew: regardless of the impatience manifested on the part of those, whose attention was already exhausted by long exertion. Pitt never condescended to avail himself of such a practice; neither lengthening his Speeches, nor abbreviating them, from any considerations except the necessity of fully developing his Ideas. Indeed, so well was the relative proportion of time generally taken up by the two Speakers, known to the old Members, that they

calculated, whenever Fox was three hours on his legs, Pitt replied in two. In all the corporeal part of Oratory, he observed likewise more moderation and measure than Fox; who on great occasions, seemed like the Pythian Priestess, "to labour with th' inspiring God," and to dissolve in floods of Perspiration. The Minister, it is true, became sometimes warmed with his subject, and had occasionally recourse to his Handkerchief: but, rather in order to take Breath, or to recall his thoughts, by a momentary pause, than from physical Agitation.

A vital defect in Pitt's composition as a Man, must be esteemed his want of Economy: it was hereditary, constitutional, and insurmountable. The great Earl of Chatham, his father, had to contend with the same deficiency; and never understood, as Lord Holland had done, the art of accumulating a Fortune. But, the first Mr. Pitt, besides the lucrative Sinecure of the Privy Seal, which he held during several years, enjoyed the Estate of Burton Pynsent in the County of Somerset, bequeathed to him by Sir William Pynsent, together with a Pension of three thousand Pounds a year, bestowed on him by

the Crown. None of these possessions however descended to his second son, whose whole patrimonial inheritance amounted, I believe, only to five thousand Pounds; and it never received any ostensible augmentation, except a Legacy of three thousand Pounds, bequeathed him in October, 1787, by the Duke of Rutland. We may therefore be enabled, with these Data, to form some idea of the Elevation of Pitt's mind, his contempt of Money, and his disregard of every selfish or interested object; when, on Sir Edward Walpole's decease in January, 1784, he disdained to take the Clerkship of the Pells in the Exchequer, though, as the Head of that Department, he might have conferred it on himself; though Lord Thurlow pressed him not to reject such a fair occasion of rendering himself independant; and though every man in the kingdom must have approved the act, on an impartial survey of his situation. For he might not have retained his official Employments, a single Week. Perhaps it is to be regretted that he should have made such a sacrifice of private interest, to Glory: but it operated throughout his whole life, and even beyond the Grave, by its effect on Parliament and on the Nation. Antiquity

cannot exhibit any more shining instance of disinterestedness, either drawn from Theban and Athenian Story, or from the Consular Ages of Rome. Juvenal's observation on human nature,

> "Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam,
> "Præmia si tollas?"

did not seem to apply to Pitt. Possibly, however, on a deep Estimate, he found even his pecuniary recompense in this noble act of renunciation. The House of Commons would hardly have bestowed the posthumous marks of solid admiration and respect, which they voted in 1806, on any Minister who had enjoyed, during two and twenty years, a sinecure Place of three thousand Pounds per Annum, in addition to his Official Emoluments.

The Salaries annexed to the place of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, even though unaided by any private Fortune, yet undoubtedly, with prudent management, might have been found adequate to Pitt's expenditure. But, unsupported by Economy, they proved wholly insufficient for the purpose. When he was appointed

First Minister, his youngest sister, Lady Harriet Pitt, resided with him, and superintended his Establishment in Downing Street. She possessed, in addition to other eminent intellectual endowments, that quality which her father and brother wanted; and so long as she personally controled his domestic affairs, I have been assured that they were restrained within very reasonable limits. Unfortunately for him, in September, 1785, within two years after he came into power, Lady Harriet gave her hand to Mr. Elliot, who became Lord Elliot on his father's Demise; and subsequent to her marriage, Pitt's concerns fell into the utmost disorder. Debts accumulated; and it was commonly asserted, that the Collectors of the Taxes found more difficulty in levying them from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, than from almost any other Inhabitant of Westminster. Even Tradesmen's Bills were said to be frequently paid, not in money, but, by ordering new articles, and thus augmenting the pressure of the evil itself.

It was not till 1792, on the Earl of Guildford's Decease, that Pitt went into the Closet, and asked of His Majesty the place of

Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which the King immediately conferred on him, though it had been previously intended by the Sovereign, as I know, for the late Duke of Dorset. The Salary, which in Mr. Pitt's person was rendered nominally Three thousand five hundred Pounds a year, might have formed a very handsome addition to his income: but, the necessary deductions of many kinds to be made from that sum; the expences which he incurred in altering or embellishing Walmer Castle; and more than both, his facility or liberality in granting small Pensions to invalided or aged Artificers, of various descriptions, belonging to the Cinque Ports; — these combined causes reduced the real receipt below half its ostensible amount. Yet when he went out of Office in 1801, loaded with Debts, he possessed no other independant means of subsistence. It is indeed true, that as early as 1790, he had been elected Master of the Trinity House; but I have always considered that Appointment, though honourable, as unproductive of any pecuniary Emolument. When we reflect on the circumstances here enumerated, we may regret, but we cannot wonder, that after holding the Reins of Government, almost his whole life; and con-

ferring so many Dignities, as well as Offices, during near nineteen years; he should die not only poor, but oppressed under a Burthen of Debt. Yet must we distinguish between a sort of virtuous, or at least venial Poverty, if I may so express myself, caused by want of Economy, in a man who devoted his exertions to the Public Service; and Fox's similar wants, produced by a rage for Play, which not only reduced him from Affluence to a state of Dereliction, but compelled him to accept an elemosynary contribution from his political and personal Friends, in order to furnish him with the means of subsistence. It is unnecessary to contrast the two positions, which undoubtedly excite in our minds very opposite sensations, and awaken widely different degrees of moral censure or disapprobation.

Pitt's great superiority to his Antagonist, and his consequent ministerial success, flowed from two causes. The first was his admirable Judgement. That intelligence restrained his parliamentary exertions during the American War, and induced him, while heaping accusations on the Ministers, to spare the King. I know that he received a hint, soon after he

began to speak in the House of Commons, warning him to avoid that rock on which Fox had split, and to be cautious how he mentioned, or alluded to, the Royal Name. He did not despise the advice. The same superior intelligence impelled him, when Lord North was driven from Power, to refuse Office under an Administration, which, he foresaw, from its component materials, could only be of short duration. It dictated to him to take the Chancellorship of the Exchequer under Lord Shelburne; but it equally suggested to him the impracticability of retaining the situation of First Minister, when pressed by His Majesty in March, 1783, to assume that high Office, after the Earl of Shelburne's Resignation. In renouncing a situation so flattering to his pride and his ambition, though it lay within his grasp, he exhibited, when not twenty-four, the deepest and calmest discernment: for, if he had yielded to the wishes of the Sovereign, it seems certain that he could not have maintained himself in power against Fox and Lord North, who had not then committed any other Act calculated to excite the public condemnation, except the mere approximation of their respective Parliamentary Adherents, and their own political union.

Pitt, with consummate Judgement, waited till the *Coalition* had brought forward the "East "India Bill," and could no longer recede, in order to profit of their indiscretion. He accepted in December, the Employment, which, nine Months earlier, he had wisely declined; exhibiting, on both occasions, equal ability: but he never associated Lord Shelburne to his power, nor allowed him a place in the Cabinet. His whole conduct, while struggling against Fox's Majority in the House of Commons, during successive Months formed the triumph of paramount capacity, over imprudence and rapacious Precipitation. If we were to pursue the comparison lower in Pitt's life, we should trace the same effects resulting from similar causes, during the critical conflict between him and Fox, in the Winter of 1788; when the latter, instead of advising the Heir Apparent to accept the Regency under any conditions, however severe, on which Parliament might think proper to confer it during the King's malady, laid claim to it as a matter of right. The Minister instantly perceived, and fastened like an Eagle, on his adversary's error; which, by producing delay, happily allowed time for His Majesty's Recovery, and of course perpetuated the duration of Pitt's power.

The second point that gave him an ascendant over Fox, arose from the correctness of his deportment, and regularity of life. This circumstance, which, under Charles the Second, would have counted for little in the scale, operated with decisive effect under a Prince such as George the Third. Nor did it produce less beneficial results with the people at large. Some internal Guarantee, drawn from moral Character, high Integrity, and indisputable Rectitude of Intention, seemed indeed necessary, in order to justify to the Nation, the choice of the Sovereign, when entrusting to a young Man, destitute of Property, the Finances and Concerns of an Empire, reduced by a long and disastrous War, to a state of great depression. Pitt had in fact no other stake to deposit, unless we take into our calculation, his possible reversion of the Earldom of Chatham. He had likewise to contend with another deficiency. During the whole course of the eighteenth Century, and I believe I may say, since the Accession of Elizabeth, he is the only English First Minister who lived and died in a state of Celibacy. He was not therefore attached to the Commonwealth by those endearing ties, which blend the Statesman, with the Husband

and the Father; thus giving a species of compound-security for good conduct, to the Country. Mr. Pelham, who presided over the Councils of Great Britain during ten years, under George the Second, was, it is true, only a younger Son of a Noble House; but his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, might be justly considered as one of the greatest Subjects in Fortune, as well as in Rank, to be found within the Kingdom. Mr. Pelham, who married a daughter of the Duke of Rutland, had likewise by her a numerous family, and possessed in his own person, considerable landed property.

Even Fox, though he remained long unmarried, yet finally entered into that state; and he aspired to have done it much earlier in life, if his efforts for the purpose had not proved unsuccessful. During the early part of Hastings's Trial, in 1787, he raised his eyes and hopes to the Duke of Newcastle's Box in Westminster Hall, where usually sat Miss Pulteney, afterwards created by Pitt, Countess of Bath in her own right; then justly esteemed one of the greatest Heiresses in the Kingdom. After exhibiting his powers of Oratory, as a public Man, in the Mana-

ger's Box below, he sometimes ascended in his private capacity, to try the effect of his Eloquence under the character of a Lover. All his Friends aided a cause, which, by rendering their Chief independant in his fortune, would have healed the wounds inflicted by his early indiscretion. General Fitzpatrick usually kept a place for him near the Lady; and for some time the Courtship assumed so auspicious an appearance, that I remember, Hare, when speculating on the probable issue of the marriage, said that "they would inevitably be "Duns, with Black Manes and Tails:" alluding to the Lady's fair Complexion and red Hair, contrasted with Fox's dark hue. The affair nevertheless terminated without success. Pitt, though, at different periods of his life, he distinguished certain Ladies, some of whom I could name, by marks of predilection; and in one instance seemed even to meditate Marriage, yet never persisted in the attempt: but his Name, Descent, Abilities, and private Character, surmounted every impediment to his elevation. Fox could no more have been placed at the head of the Treasury, than Dean Swift could have been made Archbishop of Canterbury; or than Lord Bolingbroke under Queen Anne, or the Duke of Wharton

under George the First, could have filled the office of First Minister. He wanted like them, an essential quality; high moral Character. Of this deficiency he was, himself, sensible, and was said to have once expressed his conviction of it, in laconic, but forcible terms.

While Pitt unquestionably anticipated the probable necessity of ultimately recurring to the measure of calling together a new House of Commons; he by no means disdained to avail himself of all the means and modes that could be suggested, for diminishing, and if possible, annihilating the majority, to which Fox owed his actual consequence. Every effort was exerted by himself, and by his friends, in order to accomplish that point. The Recess, limited to little more than a fortnight, allowed him only a very short space for exertion; and the numbers which had hitherto supported the *Coalition*, during the progress of the "East India Bill" through the House, in every stage, generally amounted to double, or almost double the Votes on the opposite side. Two hundred and seventeen Members had voted for its Commitment; a great proportion in an Assembly, then composed only of five hundred

and fifty-eight persons. To reduce such a superiority, first to something approaching an equality, and finally to a Minority, might well seem a hopeless undertaking; even admitting all the venality, want of principle, or tergiversation, with which that Assembly has been so often reproached. Much more success was, however, expected from applications addressed to the part of the *Coalition* which might be considered as holding to Lord North; than from the adherents of the Rockingham Party, or among the personal supporters and friends of Fox. Many of Lord North's political connexions, who had in fact voted with him on the India Bill, under a conviction of the Measure itself having obtained the consent of the Crown; were disposed to withdraw their support, if not to transfer their services, on the discovery of their mistake. There existed only three ways by which Fox's majority might be reduced. In consequence of the attendance of new Members who had not hitherto taken any part. By the future non-attendance of those who had supported the Coalition up to the present time; and lastly, by desertion from the enemy's ranks, over to those of the new Administration. The latter Votes, as counting

double, of course became most sought after and valued.

A separation had, indeed, already taken place among Lord North's immediate personal followers. Of the two former Secretaries of the Treasury, Sir Grey Cooper continued to support him invariably: but Robinson, conceiving himself absolved from any Obligation to accompany his antient Principal, through all the consequences of his new political Alliances, quitted altogether that Party. No man in the House of Commons, as I have had Occasion to remark, knew so much of its original Composition; the means by which every individual attained his Seat; and in many instances, how far, and through what channels, he might prove accessible. Though Mr. Pitt made the fifth First Minister, whom that Parliament had beheld in the short space of little more than twenty-one Months; yet the individual Members composing the Lower House, had undergone only a very trifling variation, since the general Election. Recourse was therefore had to Robinson, under the present delicate and arduous circumstances of public Affairs, in order to obtain his active exertions for Government. He complied

with the application, and unquestionably rendered very essential service. I have always considered the *Earldom* of Abergavenny, as the remuneration given for that assistance. Robinson's only daughter and child, had been married some years before, to the Honorable Henry Neville, eldest son of Lord Abergavenny; who was placed at the head of the list of *Earls*, created by Pitt, on the 11th of May, 1784, not five months after the facts took place, under our discussion.

While I am engaged on the Subject of the House of Commons, and of the Influence or Corruption by which it has been always managed, particularly during the last, and the present Reign; I shall relate some Particulars, which cannot perhaps be introduced with more Propriety than in this Place. We may see in the "Memoirs of Prince Eugene of Savoy," what Influence he attributes to the "Presents of Champagne and "Burgundy" made by Marshal Tallard, then a Prisoner of War in England, to "Right "Honourable Members of Parliament." Nay, the Prince asserts positively, that in the same Year, 1711, when he came over in Person to London, with the avowed object of retaining,

if possible, Queen Anne and her Ministers in the Grand Alliance against France; he had recourse, himself, to Corruption. "*Je fis des* "*Presens*," says he, "*car on peut acheter* "*beaucoup en Angleterre.*" If such constituted the ordinary practice under the last Princess of the Stuart Line, at a Time that Parliaments were not septennial, but only *triennial*; we may be quite assured, that they did not become more virtuous after the Accession of the reigning Family, when the House of Commons was elected for seven Years.

Proofs of the Venality practised by Sir Robert Walpole, during the whole course of his long Administration, it seems unnecessary to produce, as that Minister did not disclaim or resent the Imputation. Nor did his political Adversaries disdain, whatever Professions of public Virtue they might make, to have Recourse to the same unworthy Expedients, in order to effect his Removal. We have the authority of a Member of their own Body, for the Fact. "Don Carlos," (Frederick, Prince of Wales,) says Mr. Glover in his "Memoirs," recently published, "told "me, that it cost him Twelve thousand

"Pounds in Corruption, particularly among "the Tories, to carry the Westminster and "Chippenham Elections in 1742, and other "Points, which compelled Lord Orford, "at that Time Sir Robert Walpole, to quit "the House of Commons." It is difficult to adduce more satisfactory and unimpeachable Proof of any Fact, as Glover was a man of strict Veracity. Neither was Mr. Pelham, who, after a short Interval succeeded Sir Robert, and who held his situation near eleven Years; though he may be justly esteemed one of the most upright Statesmen who presided in the Councils of George the Second; less liable to the Accusation of corrupting Parliament, than his Predecessor.

A friend of mine, a Man of Rank and high Character, whom I do not name, because, being still alive, I consider myself not at liberty to divulge it; but, whose Name would at once stamp the Veracity and Authenticity of whatever he relates; has frequently assured me, that about the Year 1767, he was personally acquainted with *Roberts*, who had been Secretary of the Treasury under Mr. Pelham; but who was then old, infirm,

and near his End. He lies buried in Westminster Abbey, in Poets' Corner, where his Epitaph describes him, as "the most faithful "Secretary of the Right Honourable Henry "Pelham." This Gentleman conversing with Roberts, upon the Events of those Times when he held a place under Administration, and particularly on the Manner in which the House of Commons was then managed; Roberts avowed without Reserve, that while he remained at the Treasury, there were a number of Members who regularly received from him their Payment or Stipend, at the end of every Session, in Bank Notes. The Sums, which varied according to the Merits, Ability, and Attendance of the respective Individuals, amounted usually from Five Hundred Pounds, to Eight Hundred Pounds, *per Annum*. "This Largess I distributed," added Roberts, "in the Court of Requests, "on the day of the Prorogation of Parlia-"ment. I took my stand there; and as the "Gentlemen passed me, in going to, or re-"turning from the House, I conveyed the "Money, in a squeeze of the hand. What-"ever person received the Ministerial Bounty "in the manner thus related, I entered his "name in a Book, which was preserved in

" the deepest secresy; it being never in-
" spected by any one, except the King and
" Mr. Pelham. On the decease of that Minis-
" ter in 1754, his Brother the Duke of New-
" castle, Mr. Fox, afterwards Lord Holland,
" and others of the Cabinet, who succeeded to
" Power; anxious to obtain an accurate Know-
" ledge of the *private* State of the House of
" Commons, and particularly to ascertain the
" Names of all the Individuals who received
" Money during Mr. Pelham's Life, applied
" to me for Information. They further de-
" manded of me to surrender the Book, in
" which, as they knew, I was accustomed to
" enter the above Particulars. Conceiving a
" Compliance to be dishonorable, I peremp-
" torily refused to deliver it up, except by
" the King's express command, and to His
" Majesty in person. In consequence of my
" refusal, they acquainted the King of the cir-
" cumstance, who sent for me to St. James's,
" where I was introduced into the Closet;
" more than one of the above mentioned Minis-
" ters being present. George the Second or-
" dered me to return him the Book in question,
" with which injunction I immediately com-
" plied. At the same time taking the Poker in
" his hand, he put it into the fire, made it red

"hot, and then, while we stood round him, he "thrust the Book into the flames, where it was "immediately reduced to ashes. He consi- "dered it in fact, as too sacred and confiden- "tial a Register, to be thus transferred over to "the new Ministers, and as having become "extinct with the Administration of Mr. "Pelham."

It is unquestionable that the Duke of Newcastle, though he failed in getting possession of his Brother's secret information, in consequence of Roberts's firmness; yet pursued the same mode of management, on becoming, himself, First Lord of the Treasury. Under Lord Bute's Government, when, from a variety of causes, a violent Opposition in Parliament arose, which required the whole power of Ministry to stem, similar practices were carried to a greater length. John Ross Mackay, who had been private Secretary to the Earl of Bute, and afterwards, during seventeen years was Treasurer of the Ordnance; a man with whom I was personally acquainted; frequently avowed the fact. He lived to a very advanced age, sat in several Parliaments, and only died, I believe, in 1796. A Gentleman of high professional

rank, and of unimpeached veracity, told me, that dining at the late Earl of Besborough's in Cavendish Square, in the year 1790, where only four persons were present, including himself; Ross Mackay, who was one of the number, gave them the most ample information upon this subject. Lord Besborough having called, after Dinner, for a Bottle of excellent Champagne, of which wine Mackay was fond; and the conversation accidentally turning on the means of governing the House of Commons, Mackay said that "Money formed, "after all, the only effectual and certain "method." "The Peace of 1763," continued he, "was carried through and approved "by a pecuniary distribution. Nothing else "could have surmounted the difficulty. I "was, myself, the channel through which the "money passed. With my own hand I se-"cured above one hundred and twenty Votes, "on that vital question to Ministers. Eighty "thousand Pounds were set apart for the pur-"pose. Forty Members of the House of "Commons received from me, a thousand "Pounds each. To eighty others, I paid "five hundred Pounds apiece." Mackay afterwards confirmed more than once, this fact, to the Gentleman above mentioned,

who related it to me. He added, that Lord Besborough appeared, himself, so sensible of the imprudence, as well as impropriety of the avowal made by Mackay, at his Table; that His Lordship sent to him, and to the fourth person who had been present on the occasion, next morning, to entreat of them, on no account to divulge it during Mackay's life.

Wilkes was however perfectly well instructed on the subject, and made no secret of his information, even at the time when the Treaty of Fontainbleau was a recent transaction. In his memorable Letter addressed from "Paris, 22d October, 1764," to the Electors of Aylesbury, he says, "I will not "compliment the present profligate Majority "in the House of Commons, so far as to say, "they were so well informed, that they knew "the exact truth of *every* assertion in the "'North Briton,' No. 45. *One* particular, "however, came within their knowledge; "the means by which it is hinted that the "*entire Approbation of Parliament*, even of "the *Preliminary Articles* of the late inglo-"rious Peace, was obtained; and the pre-"vious step to the obtaining that *entire Ap-"probation*, the large Debt contracted on the

" *Civil List.* They knew this Assertion was " extremely *true*, and I am as ready to own " that it was extremely *scandalous.*" It is impossible to convey a charge of such a nature, in less equivocal or ambiguous language.

Relative to the three successive Administrations of George Grenville, the Marquis of Rockingham, and the Duke of Grafton, which comprized the period of time between April 1763, and January, 1770, I can state nothing from my own personal knowledge. Bradshaw conducted that Department, under the Duke of Grafton. The same System certainly continued during the period of the American War, when Robinson, and under him, Brummell, were its Agents. I incline nevertheless to doubt whether, towards the termination of Lord North's Ministry, these practices subsisted in all their force; by which I mean to say, that I question whether any individual Member of the House of Commons, was paid for his vote and support in Bank Notes, as had been done under Walpole, Pelham, and most, if not all their Successors, down to that time. More refinement had insensibly been introduced into the dis-

tribution of Gratifications; which were conveyed in oblique shapes, such as Lottery Tickets, Scrip, Jobs, Contracts, and other beneficial forms, by which the Majority was kept together, in defiance of a most unfortunate, if not an ill conducted war. Lord North, when First Minister, was supposed to command full one hundred and seventy Members at his absolute devotion, who were prepared to vote with him upon every Question: nor would his head, indeed, have been secure, from 1777 down to 1782, unless he could have counted upon such a steady and numerous support, at a time when every Month teemed with misfortunes or defeats. Of this great Body, only a comparatively small portion had however continued to adhere to him, after he joined with Fox; and many more had quitted him on the first introduction of the "India Bill." Still, even in the last days of December, 1783, when dismissed from Employment, he remained the nominal head of a considerable Party; upon many individuals composing which, it was natural to suppose, that an impression might be made, by representations addressed to their principles, their passions, or their interests. Nor can Mr. Pitt, standing as he did, in the critical, as well as

hazardous predicament, of having accepted the first Offices of Government, unsupported in one House of Parliament; be blamed for availing himself of every fair or honorable means, to diminish the Majority possessed by his Adversaries. I am at the same time persuaded, from the Elevation of his mind, and the purity of his principles, that he was incapable of authorizing, no less than Robinson would have disdained to practise, any other methods of procuring Adherents, than such as the British Constitution either recognizes, or which are in fact inseparable from its practical Existence.

Among the Persons of Eminence to whom Mr. Pitt had recourse for support, at this delicate Crisis of his Ministerial Life, when every parliamentary aid which could sustain him against the Coalition, was anxiously sought after, the late Lord Sackville attracted his attention. That Nobleman had hitherto taken no decided part in the Debates during the progress of the "East India Bill," though he voted against it personally in both the Divisions which took place on the 15th and 17th of December, in the House of Peers. He had, indeed, early considered it to be a Mea-

sure which would excite great fermentation throughout the Country, as well as opposition on the part of the Crown, when its political consequences came to be well appreciated and understood. He even repeatedly predicted, that it would probably overturn the Ministry of Lord North and Fox. Impressed with these sentiments, he exhorted his Nephew, the Duke of Dorset, who arrived in London from Paris, soon after the Session opened; to be cautious how he engaged himself too far in supporting it, till he had ascertained and sounded the ground. The Duke profited of the Advice. Lord Sackville, besides his own vote, and his Brother-in-law Lord Milton's Proxy, of which, from his influence over that Nobleman's mind, he might be said to dispose, in the same House of Parliament; brought in gratuitously two Members at East Grinstead; — for he had a mind too noble ever to sell either of the Seats; — thus commanding or influencing four Votes, in addition to his own personal weight and connexions.

During the Christmas recess, after the adjournment of the two Houses, having quitted London, he went down to his Seat at Drayton. Mr. Pitt having applied to a Member of

the House of Peers, requesting his exertions to procure Lord Sackville's personal attendance and support, at a moment of such difficulty; he mentioned my name to the Minister, as a person capable, from the friendship with which Lord Sackville honored me, of facilitating his wishes on the subject. The Nobleman in question having subsequently called on me, at a very late hour of the night, of the 29th of December, after I was in bed, aquainted me with the above-mentioned circumstances. Impelled by the wish of serving Mr. Pitt, I waited on him, at his Brother Lord Chatham's House in Berkeley Square, next Morning, and at his desire undertook the service. But I candidly informed him at the same time, that, from my knowledge of Lord Sackville's sentiments, and for the obvious reasons which must render Lord Howe, as well as the Marquis of Carmarthen, who were both Members of the New Administration, personally distasteful to him; I doubted his compliance, unless the solicitations were sustained from various quarters. And I exhorted him, not only to write, himself, to Lord Sackville, but to procure similar applications from his three personal Friends in the Cabinet; the Chancellor, the Lord

President, and Lord Sydney. Mr. Pitt readily adopted the suggestion. I then assured him that I would set off on the following Day; it being previously settled, that the Messenger, who was to be charged with the ministerial letters for Drayton, should not pass me on the road, but allow me to arrive before him at my destination.

On the ensuing Morning, being the 31st of December, I left London very early, in order to have time to see and to converse with the Duke of Dorset, in my way to Lord Sackville. The Duke was then on a visit at Lord Salisbury's, at Hatfield. I acquainted him with the object of my journey, in the success of which he co-operated with all his exertions. It was past ten at night when I reached Drayton, in most inclement weather. Lord Sackville, whom I found engaged at Chess with his youngest Daughter, expressed some surprize at my first entrance into the Apartment. But his natural penetration soon led him to conceive, that my visit at such a Season, must have a deeper motive than friendship or amusement. As soon as we were alone, I therefore told him the cause of my unexpected Arrival, and related every

circumstance that had taken place, except the advice which I had offered Mr. Pitt, respecting applications from his Friends in the Cabinet. Next day, the Messenger brought the Dispatches; and Lord Sackville, after perusing them, returned the answer which I had foreseen, namely, that "though "he would accept no Office under Ministry, "nor ask any favour from the Administra-"tion recently formed; yet, that his Prin-"ciples, and the dutiful submission that "he felt towards His Majesty, would impel "him to give every support to the New Go-"vernment, in the present arduous Crisis of "affairs." He punctually performed this promise, evincing himself a steady Friend to the Ministry, during the whole future progress of the eventful Contest then carrying on in Parliament.

It was not, however, by individual applications of any kind, nor even by private exertions and assistance, however successful they might be, nor by the interference of the Sovereign himself, that Mr. Pitt could have been maintained in Office. The Public, and the Public only, enabled him to defeat the powerful Phalanx drawn up against him. During the two first

weeks of December, while the fate of the "India Bill" remained still doubtful the Committee of Proprietors, which sat unintermittingly in Leadenhall Street, sounded the alarm from one end of the Kingdom, to the other extremity. A Member of that Committee, who took an active part in their Deliberations, assured me, that in the circular letters which they addressed to almost every Town or Corporate Body throughout Great Britain, they contented themselves with saying in few words, "Our Property and Charter are forcibly invaded. Look to your own." A copy of Fox's Bill, enclosed, which served as the best Commentary on the text, soon produced a corresponding and general effect. Ridicule and Satyre joined their aid to expose the "Coalition." Two Prints in particular, conceived with admirable humour, were circulated throughout the Metropolis. In one, Fox, under the Character of a "political Sampson," appeared carrying away on his shoulders the India House, that he had pulled down; out of the windows of which Edifice, the terrified Directors were endeavouring to effect their escape. The other Print, denominated "The triumphal entry of Carlo Khan into Delhi;" displayed the Secretary of State,

habited in the Costume of a Mogul Emperor, seated on an Elephant, whose countenance bore a most striking resemblance to Lord North; and preceded by Burke, as his Trumpeter. It is difficult to conceive the moral operation and wide diffusion of these Caricatures, through every part of the Country. About the close of the year, the new First Minister exhibited, (perhaps not without profound design,) a proof of Power, which his predecessors had never been able to display; in elevating his relation and active supporter, Mr. Thomas Pitt, to the Peerage. Before the Month of January had elapsed, two other individuals were raised by him to the same Dignity. He probably meant to shew his Adherents, as well as his Opponents, in the House of Commons, the facility with which he disposed of the Honors of the Crown, withheld by the Sovereign from the "Coalition;" and consequently the rewards which might attend the early repairing to the royal Standard. In order to counteract this display of Ministerial favor, and to keep their forces together, his Antagonists were said to have promised a long list of contingent British Peerages, exceeding thirty in number, to their principal friends in the Lower House. The names of these Gentle-

men were in general circulation; and the greater part of them have since, at different periods subsequent to the French Revolution, received from Pitt the Boon, which they had failed to obtain from the Coalition Administration.

1784. 12th January.] Whatever favorable effect, the Peerage conferred by the Minister on Mr. Thomas Pitt, might produce within the walls of the House of Commons; an act which he performed soon afterwards, operated far more beneficially for him without doors, on the minds of the Public. Sir Edward Walpole's death having vacated the lucrative post of Clerk of the Pells in the Exchequer; Pitt, instead of taking it for himself, or conferring it on his Brother Lord Chatham, as might not only have seemed natural and venial, but as he was urged to do by his political friends; immediately gave it to Colonel Barré, in order to extinguish the ample Pension enjoyed by him ever since Lord Shelburne's accession to power. So unusual a proof of superiority to pecuniary temptation, exhibited by a man destitute of patrimonial Fortune; even though it might have originated in deep policy, more than in disinterestedness,

as his enemies asserted or insinuated; yet attracted just admiration, and extorted general applause. Fox, nevertheless, while he admitted the abstract merit of the action itself, did not reprobate with less severity, the principles on which Pitt had acquired possession of Office. Nor did he display with less ostentation, on the day when the House of Commons met, after its short Adjournment, the unlimited command that he exercised over the Majority of that Assembly. Of this empire he gave the most convincing proof, by not only, in Parliamentary language, taking possession of the House when it re-assembled; but, by precluding the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in subversion of all usage, from being heard, though charged with a Message from the King, till Fox had submitted and carried five Resolutions, in a Committee on the State of the Nation. Three of these, he moved, himself. The other two, he delegated to Lord Surrey, who was said to have been selected from among the numerous Candidates for Parliamentary Service, in consequence of a classic recommendation. It having been agitated at the Meeting of the Opposition, held on the preceding Evening, at Burlington House; what individual to choose for bring-

ing forward two of the Resolutions next day, in the House of Commons; one of the persons present, on being appealed to for his opinion, exclaimed with *Richard*,

"Saddle black *Surrey* for the field to morrow!"

Throughout the whole Debate which took place on that occasion, Fox appeared as the Arbiter of the scene, propelling, restraining, and directing the machine, according to his volition; while the Minister, sustained only by the vast powers of his mind, and a consciousness of possessing equally the royal, and the popular favor, struggled vainly against the current. He was, with his followers, borne away by its violence, after making an eloquent and masterly appeal to the candor of his audience. One of Lord Surrey's Motions, calculated to stigmatize the King personally, as having permitted "his sacred Name to be "unconstitutionally used, in order to affect "the Deliberations of Parliament;" was voted by a very considerable Majority, in a crowded House, at seven o'clock in the morning. Yet, even amidst so conspicuous a triumph, Fox might find subject for just apprehension, in his already diminished numbers. Instead of di-

viding, as he had done before the Recess, nearly *two to one* upon almost every Question, He carried the first Division against Administration, upon "going into the Committee on "the Order of the Day," by only *thirty-nine*; though four hundred and twenty-five Members voted on the occasion. Lord Surrey's Motion passed, it is true, by *fifty-four*; but, as only three hundred and thirty-eight persons voted on that Question, it appeared evident that the augmentation on the side of Opposition, arose from the better discipline and closer attendance enforced among their followers, than was observed by the adherents of Government. When Fox, elated by his advantage, attempted, four days afterwards, on the 16th of January, to make the House declare, that "the Continuance of "Ministers in Office, was contrary to the "Principles of the Constitution," he found his Majority declined to *twenty-one*, on a Division where three hundred and eighty-nine Members voted. His Parliamentary Ascendancy therefore palpably rested on a most precarious and decaying foundation.

Never, in the History of Parliament, were Debates conducted with more asperity and

personal recrimination, than during the period of Pitt's and Fox's contest for power. Accusations the most futile and unbecoming, were preferred on both sides, with the view of rendering each other odious to the Nation. Sir Richard Hill, Member for Shropshire, animadverted with some severity, on the attendance, and marks of interest exhibited by the Prince of Wales, while present in the lower House. His Royal Highness, though from deference to his Father's avowed wishes, he had absented himself on the day when "the "East India Bill" was finally rejected in the House of Peers; yet did not the less retain his predilection for its authors. His presence in the House of Commons, might therefore be considered as indirectly encouraging to Fox and "the Coalition." Frederic, Prince of Wales, his Grandfather, had however given the same marks of partiality to the Minority which drove Sir Robert Walpole from power, in the beginning of 1743, without exciting any comment or disapprobation. Pulteney, then at the head of Opposition, even alluded in one of his Speeches, to his consciousness of the august Personage before whom he spoke. Sir Richard Hill was one of the most upright, disinterested, and honest

men who ever sat in Parliament. Andrew Marvel was not more incorrupt: but his religious cast of character laid him open to the shafts of ridicule. The "Rolliad" describes him as

"Friend of King George, but of King Jesus more."

In the same Manner, the Earl of Dartmouth, while a Member of Lord North's Cabinet, being likewise known to entertain very deep sentiments of Religion, had obtained from the Opposition, the nick-name of "the Psalm Singer."

The indecorous personality of Debate that distinguished the Lower House, during this extraordinary crisis of affairs, produced scenes apparently unbecoming the Assembly where they originated, and such as we would vainly expect to find in more tranquil periods of our Parliamentary History. General Ross rising in his place, accused a Lord of the Bedchamber, the Earl of Galloway, with endeavouring to influence his Vote, by allusions or direct intimations of the royal displeasure at his supporting "the Coalition." Lord Galloway's Brother, the Honorable Keith Stewart, read a written denial of the assertion: but

the General persisted in maintaining the charge. Lampoons, a weapon in the management of which, the Opposition unquestionably excelled their opponents, were circulated with great assiduity and effect. In one of them, Stewart was thus apostrophized;

> " Captain Keith, Captain Keith,
> Keep your tongue in your teeth,
> Lest your Bedchamber secrets betray.
> And if you want more,
> Why, my bold Commodore,
> You may borrow of Lord Galloway."

Keith Stewart had incurred some censure or reflexions, perhaps unjustly, during the War with Holland, for having allowed a homeward bound Dutch ship of war to slip through the Downs, and reach the Texel, while he was said to have been on shore at Deal. His Brother, Lord Galloway, having very defective teeth, it was well known, used a complete set of artificial teeth. Sir Richard Hill, who almost always drew his allusions or authorities from Holy Writ, endeavoured to prove the benefit of secret Influence, by adducing the instances of Haman and of Mordecai. "The honest Israelite," he observed, "repaired privately to Court, and

"averted the danger which threatened the "People of God from Haman's Ambition; "who being driven from the Cabinet, was "finally suspended from a Gibbet." Even Mr. Dundas, who might have been esteemed incapable of descending to such modes of attack; yet, referring to Lee's very imprudent assertion, that "a Charter was only a Scroll of "Parchment, with a piece of wax dangling "to it;" observed, that it had been asked, "What was the great harm of hanging an "Attorney General? An hanged Attorney "General, was only a carcase dangling at the "end of a rope." Sheridan, however, retorted on him with equal ability and severity, for this Metaphor. Lord North accused the Ministers with canvassing for Votes, from one extremity of the kingdom, to the other: an imputation repeated in still stronger language by General Conway, who denominated their Agents, *Rat Catchers;* but, which Charge was repelled by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as destitute of proof. On the other hand, Rigby complained that Robinson, in the anticipation of a speedy Dissolution of Parliament, had made use of Ministerial influence to affect the future Election of a Member for the Borough of Harwich, though he did not

think proper to ground any specific Motion on his Complaint.

Alluding to the reflexions thrown out by Sir Richard Hill, on the Prince of Wales, for attending Questions under agitation in that House, Fox exclaimed with warmth, "God "forbid, that Royal Personage should not "participate in its political concerns! Where "can he so well imbibe a knowledge of the "principles of our Constitution, as within "these walls? How can he better illustrate "the excellence of his Character, than by "thus blending personal respect for the King "his Father, with attachment to his Coun-"try?" Not deterred by such observations, from animadverting on other circumstances connected with His Royal Highness's personal appearance under the Gallery; the new Treasurer of the Navy remarked hypothetically, that "if the great Personage in question, not "content with merely listening to the Debates, "should on any occasion testify by his beha-"viour or gesticulations, while in the House, a "predilection or partiality for any set of "men; such marks of his preference would "be unbecoming, and might operate as a "means of influence." No answer was

given to the supposed case thus stated: but Lord North, in the course of the Evening, after expatiating on the eminent virtues of the Heir Apparent, expressed a becoming admiration at "his attending the House of "Commons, where he might imbibe the true "spirit of our Constitution, and become ac-"quainted with the nature of this limited "Government, rather than listening to flat-"terers." The Comments on this delicate subject, proceeded no further, and were not renewed during the remainder of the Parliament.

16th January.] The City of London led the way to the rest of the Kingdom, by going up at this Juncture to the foot of the Throne, with an Address, thanking His Majesty for the very interference, which the House of Commons had pronounced to be subversive of the Constitution. They retorted at the same time, upon the framers of Fox's India Bill, the charge of "raising a power unknown to "this free Government, and highly inimical "to its safety." Encouraged by such unequivocal demonstrations of the affection of the Metropolis, and of the corresponding defection in the Ranks of the Opposition, Pitt ventured

to propose another East India Bill, framed by himself, the second reading of which took place on the 23d of January. All the faculties of the two great Leaders, who had originated those respective Measures, were exerted in the attack and the defence of Pitt's Bill, which was rejected only by *eight* Votes, out of four hundred and thirty-six persons who divided. Such, indeed, was Fox's consciousness of these Victories finally terminating in Defeat, that no sconer had he thrown out the Bill of the Minister, than he moved for leave to introduce his own Bill a second time; but, so changed and modified in its leading Principles, as to be scarcely recognizable for the same Measure. He unquestionably perceived when too late, the error into which his own ill regulated Ambition, propelled by Burke's ardent and theoretical Spirit, had precipitated the Party. In order therefore to conciliate the Favour of the House, and of the Country, to the Measure, he now offered to abandon almost all its obnoxious provisions; particularly the Patronage, which had excited so much obloquy and clamour. There remained only two fundamental principles or features, which he declared himself unable to retract; namely, the permanency of the System for

the Government of India, under Parliamentary Authority; and secondly, that the supreme Controul itself should be established, not on the Ganges, but here at home. The proposition, however, appeared to be no longer suited to the Exigency. It is impossible not to accuse Fox of want of judgment, throughout every part of the transactions which led to his ministerial downfall. A cautious, or a temperate Politician, would not have furnished the Sovereign, to whom he was personally unacceptable, with the means of precipitating him from the elevation to which he had attained with so much labour. Had the "Coalition" made a judicious and moderate use of their power, the King, however he might have lamented his situation, could not have liberated himself from their yoke. They enabled him, by their errors, to emancipate himself. When we reflect that another Coalition, formed by Lords Grenville and Grey, in 1807, uninstructed by experience, renewed and exhibited nearly the same error, followed by the same results, it affords no common matter of astonishment.

After the rejection of the Minister's Bill for the Government of India, Fox, sustained

by Members in various parts of the House, endeavoured to force from Pitt an explicit Declaration of his intentions relative to a Dissolution of Parliament: but neither interrogatories nor menaces could prevail over his Determination to observe a profound silence on that point. He was with difficulty induced, on the following day, to guarantee the Existence of the House of Commons, even for eight and forty hours.

23d January.] Notwithstanding the rising indignation of the Capital and the Country, which every day manifested itself with augmenting Energy, in favour of Administration; yet the Minister's situation at this juncture, equally painful in itself, as it was without precedent, appeared to be at times not wholly exempt from personal Danger. Fox might be said, without either Metaphor or exaggeration, to hold suspended over his head, the severest marks of the indignation of an offended House of Commons. His removal from the King's Presence and Councils, as an Enemy to his Country; his Impeachment, or his Commitment to the Tower; — any, or all of these propositions might probably, nay might certainly have been carried, in moments of efferves-

cence, when the passions of a Popular Assembly, inflamed by such a Conductor as Fox, seemed to be ripe for any act of violence. The irritation and impatience produced by Debates, protracted or repeated night after night, rendered his followers susceptible of impressions the most hostile to the Minister; who, in sullen Majesty, or in contumelious Silence, heard, unmoved, their clamorous Denunciations, seated calmly on the Treasury Bench. Mr. Pitt displayed in that situation, during successive weeks, a combination of fortitude, self-possession, and ability, which I never recollect without admiration. He did not indeed manifest the suavity, amenity, and wit, of Lord North, or of Sheridan. But, always preserving the command of himself, he was never led into deviations from caution and prudence, even when he seemed most to set at defiance the menaces of his Adversaries. If we reflect on his period of life, our surprize is augmented. He constituted indeed in himself, the Administration which he defended; and which, without him, could not have been maintained in existence.

It may naturally be asked why Fox, holding in his hand so powerful an Engine as the Majority of a House of Commons, which As-

sembly, he well knew, might every day be dissolved; and the individual Members composing which superiority, he saw diminishing after almost every Debate or Division, in consequence of the natural operation of a variety of obvious causes; yet should never have let fall its vengeance on the Head of the Minister, whom he apparently held in his Power? Why, when he saw all the ordinary expedients exhausted or ineffectual, which might compel the King to dismiss his Administration, or induce the Ministry to resign; did he tamely wait, till Mr. Pitt's Measures being ripe, and the Country having declared almost unanimously on his side, a Dissolution reduced the "Coalition" to insignificance, and overwhelmed their ill-concerted schemes for perpetuating their Authority? Fox wanted neither vigor, decision, nor inclination, to have anticipated his own downfall, and the extinction of his ambitious plans. Nor could he deceive himself relative to the political destruction which impended over the "Coalition," if they did not prove victorious in the actual contest. How then are we to explain this seeming contradiction?

Fox possessed no absolute certainty in the first place, whatever he might believe, that the same

Majority which had supported him in voting Remonstrances to the Throne, would either stop the Supplies, or carry up an Address for Mr. Pitt's removal. Various Country Gentlemen called for a Union, and thought that no Administration from which he should be excluded, was equal to the National Emergency. Even many of Fox's Supporters among them, deprecated all extremities. They might abandon him. He might therefore be left in a Minority, and all his consequence, as the Head of a great Party, would thus be lost by one imprudent Step. But granting however, as seemed most probable, that he should carry a personal Question against Mr. Pitt, by ten, twenty, or thirty Votes, in a crowded House; what would be the inevitable effect of such a victory? That the King, sustained by the voice of the Country, and not susceptible of Fear, when he believed himself to be acting right; instead of dismissing his Ministers, would dissolve the Parliament, and confidently appeal to the People, against their own Representatives. In that case, Fox, far from attaining his object, would only have accelerated a Dissolution; and would afford to his Antagonist, a plausible, if not a solid excuse, for advising the Sovevereign to adopt that Measure. These were

unquestionably, the real causes of Fox's apparent moderation. Nor did Pitt, on the other hand, want motives equally powerful in restraining him from any precipitate movement. The County Members who supported him, were adverse to a Dissolution, unless circumstances rendered it indispensable. By temporizing and protracting, however irksome, and even in some degree humiliating, might be considered his Situation in Parliament; he gave time for the public Sentiment to be loudly, as well as generally pronounced, and could avail himself of it at any moment. Such were the considerations which mutually withheld the two Chiefs from proceeding to extremities, till the natural and unavoidable progress of Affairs, produced the final Consummation.

26th January.] The idea of endeavouring to reconcile two Men, who combined in their Characters, almost all the great Endowments fitted for Government; if it could be realized, seemed apparently pregnant, at first view, with incalculable benefit to the Country. Some Individuals of respectability in the House of Commons, impelled by these feelings, undertook the Experiment. However

specious in Theory, it nevertheless proved impracticable, and only served to demonstrate the futility of the attempt. The St. Alban's Tavern became the scene of this Exhibition, to which place repaired about sixty or more Members, distinguished for Character, large Property, and Uprightness of Intention. Though they chose Mr. Thomas Grosvenor for their nominal Chairman, their Deliberations and Proceedings were chiefly conducted by two Gentlemen, who had already, on various occasions, taken a Lead in the Debates carried on within the walls of the House. The first, the Honourable Charles Marsham, Son and Heir of Lord Romney, though a Man by no means prepossessing or engaging in his Manners, which were coarse and rude; attracted deservedly general consideration in his Parliamentary Capacity. The other, Mr. Powis, Member for the County of Northampton, who commonly prefaced his Speeches, on occasions of interest, by a copious discharge of tears, which he seemed to command at will; challenged attention from his recognized integrity, and assumed impartiality. The Duke of Portland, as nominal head of one Party, and Pitt, as Leader of the other, affected equally to receive with deference the proposi-

tions made to each, on the part of the associated Members. It is probable, however, that the Duke, in this profession, might be more sincere than the Minister. Difficulties and objections, either to a personal interview, or to a negociation, were started in turn by both. Pitt refusing to resign, or even to hear of a *virtual* resignation, which was required of him, as a previous step to any conference for the purpose of forming an extended Administration; the overtures were suspended, and finally broken off, in consequence of these preliminary impediments. But the patriotic zeal of the St. Alban's Meeting, was not to be overcome by ordinary obstacles; and they returned to the charge, apparently under more propitious Auspices. In compliance with their suggestion and wishes, the King was even induced to send a message to the Duke of Portland, recommending a conference between him and Pitt, with a view to constitute a Ministry, on "a wide Basis, and on *fair and equal* terms." Instead of instantly closing with such a proposition, from which neither the Sovereign, nor the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whatever might have been their secret wishes, could easily recede, without incurring the imputation of insincerity; the Duke of Port-

land and Fox thought proper to cavil about the acceptation of the term "equal." At this opening, with which they furnished him, Pitt escaped, by refusing to define any expressions, before the proposed interview.

All further efforts were abandoned therefore, with a view to produce a political union between two Men, whose mutual animosity and rivality seemed to have derived new force, from the unsuccessful attempts made to effect a reconciliation. With whatever complacency and ostensible alacrity, Pitt received the propositions for such a junction, it is difficult to persuade ourselves that he could cordially desire their accomplishment. He beheld the prize for which they were contending, nearly attained and secured. His Ambition impelled him to govern alone, without an equal and a Co-adjutor in the Cabinet, of such energy as Fox. Their mutual recriminations in Parliament, which had been so acrimonious and so recent, seemed hardly to admit of being buried in instant oblivion. We are warranted therefore in believing, that an accomodation, forced on both by imperious circumstances, would have proved hollow, insincere, and of short duration. They appeared to be not formed

for acting together, nor did they ever coalesce for an instant, during their whole remaining lives. The French Revolution itself, which brought over to Government, as to an Asylum against Anarchy, so many other Individuals, at whose head were the Duke of Portland, Burke, and Windham; could never induce Fox to quit the Opposition Bench. He remained fixed there above two and twenty years, till Death liberated him from his Antagonist; and he then only became a Minister, when his own career drew to its close.

February.] The Discussions which took place in the House of Commons, between the close of January, and the middle of the ensuing Month, though equally violent and acrimonious with the preceding Debates, contained less matter of interest, or of novelty. Accusations, levelled against the "East India Bill," from the Treasury Bench; or against secret influence, from the opposite side; began to weary their hearers, and made little impression. Fox continued, it is true, master of the deliberations of the Lower House of Parliament; his Majorities sometimes falling as low as nineteen, and at other times rising to thirty-one: but this superiority was far

overbalanced by his decline in the popular esteem. No eloquence, nor any exertions of Sophistry, could reconcile the Public to his Union with Lord North, followed immediately by a measure obviously calculated to cement their political power at the expence of the Crown, which it must have reduced to a state of vassalage. In the course of the Debate that arose on the 3d of February, Sheridan avowed without circumlocution, that when Fox first communicated to him the proposition of coalescing with his antient adversary, he advised his right honorable friend by no means to accede to it; as the insurmountable prejudices imbibed throughout the Nation, would infallibly produce the loss of his popularity, character, and general estimation. Sheridan added indeed, that on maturely weighing the motives of State Necessity by which it was dictated; when sustained by his experience of the honour, principles, and steadiness of Lord North; he rejoiced at the union which had taken place, even in contradiction to his own advice. But, it is evident from this disclosure of his sentiments, that he reasoned more dispassionately than Fox; who, seduced by his Ambition, and beholding only the ascendant which Lord North's junction would

give him, in one, if not in both, Houses of Parliament, imagined that he could coerce the Sovereign, and either persuade, delude, or despise the People. The event fully justified Sheridan's opinion, and manifested the superiority of his judgment: since, even though we should admit that Lord Shelburne would inevitably have remained in power, if Fox had not joined Lord North, yet the former must have occupied the most imposing situation, as a public Man, while maintaining his original ground of Opposition; and could not have been long excluded from a participation in the Counsels of the Crown, even by Pitt himself.

In vain did Sheridan, with admirable wit, endeavour to shew that an equal sacrifice of all political principle had taken place on the Ministerial side of the House, as among the Members opposite them: an assertion which he attempted to illustrate by the spectacle which the Treasury Bench exhibited, where the individuals now seated side by side, were recently acting in hostility towards each other. But, the union of inferior or subordinate persons, did not excite sentiments of equal repugnance, nor awaken such moral condemna-

tion, as the coalition of two principals, the one of whom had, for successive years, been loaded by the other, with the severest imputations, and denounced as a just object of national vengeance. In vain did Fox accuse the First Minister, "after assassinating the "Constitution, by secret Influence in one "House of Parliament; with having recourse "to methods of the basest corruption, in "order to procure a majority in another." As vainly did Rigby reproach Pitt with lavishing Peerages for the same purpose; while it was notorious that the late Administration was debarred from conferring similar Dignities, and had not been able to make even a single British Peer. With as little effect did Marsham read the Resolutions adopted by the Meeting at the St. Alban's Tavern, affirming "that any Administration founded on the total "exclusion of the Members of the last, or of "the present Ministry, would be inadequate "to the public exigencies:" or did Powis urge the Chancellor of the Exchequer to resign, as a necessary preliminary to all conciliation. Pitt, though he professed to desire an union, "provided it could be effected with-"out a sacrifice of principle or of honour;" yet not only refused previously to retire

from Office, but started many impediments to the accomplishment of the object itself.

No symptoms of approximation between the contending parties, beyond unmeaning professions of mutual disposition to bury in oblivion past animosities, took place: while among their respective adherents, a spirit of inveterate enmity was exhibited. Lord Mulgrave charged Fox with "trampling the House of "Brunswic under foot," by his "East India "Bill;" and though called to order by the late Secretary of State, inveighed against him as "a plunderer and an invader." Governor Johnstone said that "if an election for *a* "*King* were to take place in this Country, "Mr. Fox should have his vote; so high an "opinion did he entertain of those trans-"cendant Abilities which the Right Honor-"able Gentleman possessed: but, wishing to "preserve the Constitution, he had negatived "a Bill which would have placed its author "above all controul." Wilberforce declared, that "even if that obnoxious Measure had "passed the House of Peers, by as great a "Majority as it did the Lower House, yet "he should equally have thanked the Crown "for dismissing the late Ministers." Mr.

Beaufoy levelled his censures against Lord North, for "preserving the hilarity of his "temper, and insulting the sorrows of Bri-"tain with his jokes, after ruining her "finances, shedding the Blood of her people, "and losing the half of her Empire." Pitt himself, treating with defiance, as well as with contempt, Fox's indirect attempts to force his resignation, called on his Antagonist to come boldly forward; and either to criminate his conduct as a Minister, or to move a personal Question for his removal from Office. Professing his own purity, both as a man, and as a public functionary, he avowed his indifference for all the clamour of Party, or the unfounded imputations brought against the mode of his attaining power; and concluded by trusting that the House would do justice to the motives which actuated his present line of conduct.

11th February.] Burke by no means took the same active or conspicuous part in the Debates that followed the rejection of the "East India Bill," as he had exhibited while the measure was on its progress to the Upper House. With the loss of the Pay Office, he seemed to have lost much of his energy of

mind. Even Lord North scarcely occupied the second place in these parliamentary convulsions, where Sheridan and Erskine, Powis and Marsham, severally attracted almost as much attention, as the late First Minister. His Blue Riband, seen conspicuous among the great Coats, buff Waistcoats, and dirty Boots of his new Allies, involuntarily recalled the reflexion of his having given the law from the Treasury Bench, during twelve years, to the same Assembly, in which he now performed so humiliating and inferior a character. He bore nevertheless, this political change, under which many men would have sunk, with that imperturbable serenity and equality of temper, which ever distinguished him through life. He acquired even the applauses of every Party, by the manly promptitude, and cheerful readiness, which he shewed to sacrifice all personal objects, or private interests, to the public tranquillity. When Pitt avowed, that however highly he might respect that Nobleman's abilities, or private character, yet they could never sit together in the same Cabinet; Lord North, while he loudly censured the contemptuous dignity, and unaccommodating spirit, of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; yet declared, that no considerations relative to

himself, should for an instant impede the formation of a new Ministry, consonant to the general wishes of the Country. This Declaration called out the warmest expressions of admiration from Marsham and Powis: Eulogiums the more noticed, as no individuals in the House, had treated him with greater acrimony, when First Lord of the Treasury, during the latter part of the American War. He was nevertheless unable to prevent the Borough of Banbury, for which place he sat, and where his family had always possessed a decisive influence; from joining in the general cry against the "Coalition," and even framing an Address, thanking His Majesty for the recent dismission from Office, of their actual Representative in the House of Commons. A Delegation from the inhabitants of Banbury, waited on me in London, bringing with them the Address, itself; accompanied by a request that I would present it to the King, on the first Levee Day at St. James's. But, on full consideration, I declined taking such a personal part against a Nobleman whom I greatly respected, loved, and honoured, though I had withdrawn from the Party with which he had connected himself. Lord North, alluding afterwards, during

the Debate which took place on the 27th of February, to this Address, declared that "he "had the consolation to know, it was not "signed by one of those individuals, his "Constituents, who returned him to Parlia-"ment." It spoke nevertheless, the sentiments of a large and respectable portion of the inhabitants and householders of the place.

18th February.] No circumstance could more forcibly demonstrate the little apprehension felt by Pitt, of the indignation of Parliament, or prove in a stronger manner the confidence with which his own popularity inspired him, than his conduct at this juncture. Almost immediately after the extinction of the fallacious expectations awakened by the St. Alban's Tavern Meeting, the Chancellor of the Exchequer rising in his place, calmly acquainted the House, that "the "King, notwithstanding their Resolutions, "had not thought proper to dismiss his Mi-"nisters; and that they had not resigned." Such a piece of information, so delivered, seemed meant to force the "Coalition" on some measure of violence. Fox, nevertheless, while he did not affect to conceal his indignation at the affront offered to the legisla-

tive Body, and at the defiance conveyed in the Minister's words; yet knew too well the feeble state of the Machine over which he presided, to press heavily upon its springs. He reprobated indeed, the treatment which the House experienced; a treatment demanding, he said, exemplary punishment. But he concluded with only proposing an Adjournment of eight and forty hours, in order to give the Minister time for reflexion. This Motion he carried by *twelve*; a very slender superiority, where above four hundred Members divided. Fox, on this occasion, though he pretended to deprecate any intemperate step, and only demanded a respite of one or two days; exclaiming with Dido, while he accommodated her Complaints to his own Feelings,

"Tempus inane peto; spatium requiemque *Furori*;"

yet endeavoured, by a most able and laboured appeal to the wounded Pride of the House, to inflame their Passions, while he directed their resentment against the Minister.

Pitt, on the other hand, charged him and his Adherents with systematically withholding

the Supplies; thus sacrificing their Country to private Faction, Enmity, or Ambition. A distinction was however drawn by the Opposition, between withholding the Supplies, and only postponing them; which latter line of conduct, Powis, in moderate language, and Marsham, with much stronger asseveration, declared to constitute their sole intention. The last mentioned Member recriminated with asperity on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as expecting from him the same servile submission in registering the ministerial Edicts, which the French Sovereigns exacted in the Assemblies denominated Parliaments. With more ability, Fox attempted to make a Compromise with the Minister; offering instantly to vote the Supplies, provided that the House might receive assurances from him, that "His "Majesty would comply with the desires of "his faithful Commons." But, Pitt, after first declaring the conviction of "his personal "Honour being inseparably connected with "his present official Situation, and his determination never to resign, as a prelude to "Negociation;" peremptorily refused to barter Office for Supply, or to enter into any stipulation on the subject. From this Resolution, expressed in laconic, but energetic

terms, neither menaces, blandishments, nor expostulations, could induce him to recede: and after a prolonged Debate of two successive days, Fox, as the Master of the House, finally moved to adjourn the sitting on the State of the Nation, which was carried without a Division. He was all-powerful within those Walls; but Pitt's superiority lay without doors, in every County, Town, and Village.

Already, Addresses crowded in, from London down to New Sarum; a Borough which, though consisting only of one solitary Farm House, yet, as belonging to Lord Camelford, who had just been elevated to the Peerage, did not omit to offer its Tribute of Loyalty to the Crown, and of abhorrence for the Measures of the Opposition. Middlesex, Southwark, even Westminster, abandoning Fox, approached the Throne with Congratulations, or with Testimonies of Approbation at the Dismission of the late Ministers. York, a City where the Cavendish Interest had always been predominant, and which place the late Chancellor of the Exchequer actually represented in Parliament; Edinburgh, Worcester, Exeter, and many other inferior towns, followed the example, which spread with rapidity throughout the

whole Island. When we reflect on these facts, we shall probably think that Mr. Pitt, whatever professions he might either make, himself, or whatever wishes for "an united "and extended Administration," he might judge proper to put into his Royal Master's mouth, in reply to the Addresses of the House of Commons; yet could have nourished no serious intentions of dividing his power with Fox.

February 4th—16th.] The House of Peers, which Assembly, after arresting the progress of the "East India Bill," as if exhausted by that effort, had ever since remained silent and supine spectators of the contest between the Crown and the Commons; exhibited some symptoms of animation about this time, by adopting, early in the Month of February, two Propositions, of a nature tending to condemn the conduct of the lower House, and to strengthen the hands of the Sovereign. The Earl of Effingham, who during many years of his life, had manifested the most decided hostility to the King's Government; and who, as late as June, 1780, was accused of personally mixing in the Riots of the Capital; now appeared as the zealous

Defender of Prerogative. He was sustained by the Duke of Richmond, whose political Character and Opinions had undergone since 1782, a similar transformation: while on the other hand, the Resolutions moved by Lord Effingham, found the warmest Opponents in Lord Mansfield, in Lord Stormont, and Lord Loughborough, so long the systematic Champions of Royalty.

Few Debates more animated, as well as acrimonious and personal, have ever taken place within the Walls of the Upper House, than occurred on this occasion. While Lord Fitzwilliam drew the most unfavourable portrait of the young First Lord of the Treasury, whom he described as deficient not only in experience, and averse to every social source of information, but as devoured by an overweening and insatiable thirst of power; the Duke of Richmond panegyrized his Industry, his Abstraction from Dissipation, his Application to public Business, Frugality, and Elevation of Mind; the last of which qualities had been so conspicuously displayed in his recent renunciation of a lucrative sinecure place. Lord Stormont endeavoured to point the public indignation

against him, for his presumption in continuing to retain his situation, in defiance of the Votes and Resolutions of the House of Commons: while his Predecessors in Office, Sir Robert Walpole, Lord North, and the Earl of Shelburne, had each in turn anticipated, or respectfully obeyed, the first demonstrations of the pleasure of that Branch of the Legislature. The Earl of Mansfield, with the political timidity so characteristic of his whole life, in every situation, judicial or parliamentary; deprecated, as the greatest of calamities, any Resolution, which, by interrupting the harmony subsisting between the two Houses, might lead to a Dissolution. He seemed to contemplate such an event, as commensurate with the destruction of the British Constitution itself; as disbanding the Army, laying up the Navy, suspending the Functions of Government, and throwing the Country into irremediable confusion. The House, neither deterred nor intimidated by these Denunciations, voted the Resolutions by a large Majority of forty-seven; and followed them immediately by an Address to the Throne, expressive of their reliance on His Majesty's wisdom in the selection of his confidential Servants, as well as by the assurances of their Support, in

the just exercise of those Prerogatives entrusted to him for the Protection of his People. It was difficult to imagine a triumph more decisive over the "Coalition," or a more opportune and important accession of strength to the First Minister, struggling against a Majority in the House of Commons. The King received and replied to the Address, in laconic, but warm and affectionate language.

In other periods of our History, such an Interference, followed by such a Censure, might, and unquestionably would, have called out the Resentment of the Representatives of the People. But, as Fox justly dreaded all Occasions of Rupture, or of Dispute between the two Houses, which might afford the New Ministers a plausible pretence for the Dissolution of Parliament; he contented himself with dictating and carrying six Counter Resolutions, tending to justify the Line of Conduct that had been adopted by the House of Commons. Lord Beauchamp was selected for the performance of this service; and after a series of Debates which occupied eleven days, distinguished throughout by the same asperity as had been exhibited in every pre-

ceding Discussion, the Resolutions finally passed without a Division. In the progress of these gladiatorial exhibitions of parliamentary ability and dexterity; — for such they could only be deemed; — Fox, conscious that the conflict in which he had engaged, wore from day to day a more sinister appearance, and must, however protracted, terminate in his downfall; assumed every shape, and tried every means, of inducing his Adversary to propose, or to accept, some Principles of Accommodation. At one time he denounced the First Lord of the Treasury, and held him up to national execration, as a Conspirator, who aimed at the life of the House of Commons; whom he at the same time daily insulted by appearing among them as a confidential Servant of the Crown, though destitute of their Confidence or Support. Changing altogether his tone, a few days afterwards, in soothing accents, calculated to win their way into the heart, he complimented Pitt's abilities; professed respect for his political Principles; expressed his readiness, nay, his eagerness, to form an Union, provided it was grounded, not on private Interest or Aggrandizement, but on great public meritorious motives of action; apologized for any harsh or unguarded ex-

pressions which might have occurred in the warmth of Debate; avowed his Ambition and love of Glory, as sentiments which he felt in common with the First Lord of the Treasury; and finished by protesting that he would make every personal Sacrifice at the Shrine of his Country.

In further corroboration of these conciliating dispositions, Fox took occasion to declare that he was ready to accommodate and modify his obnoxious Bill for the Government of India, so as to meet the public wish, and to acquire the public confidence. He would abandon the patronage which it conferred, and would submit every Clause or Regulation of the Measure itself, to the Discussion of Parliament. His Noble Friend, Lord North, would prove no obstacle to union between the two Parties. Only one stipulation he could never recede from; namely, Mr. Pitt's virtual resignation, as indispensable, and as an expiation to the violated Constitution of Great Britain. In reply to these alternate Menaces and Blandishments, the Minister, on his part, affected and professed an equal desire of union, on bases of principle and honour; disclaimed all personal

views in the line of conduct which he had adopted, by his acceptance of Office; declared that he should ever think he had performed an essential Service to his Country, by defeating a Measure big with destruction to the Constitution; expressed his consolation at finding that Fox was disposed to renounce any of its pernicious features; protested that he and his Colleagues were all ready to resign their Employments, as soon as a prospect presented itself of forming an Administration by which the State might be effectually served; but concluded by declaring, that he could neither reconcile it to the Duty that he owed his Sovereign and the people of England, nor to his own Honour, to lay down his Office, before he beheld such a prospect. It was evident that, amidst these reciprocal professions and demonstrations, not the smallest advance was made on either side, towards real approximation.

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20th February.] However decidedly the sentiments of the Capital and of the Nation had been already pronounced in favour of the new Ministers, yet Fox still retained firm possession of the House of Commons, though he held that Assembly, as he well knew, only

by a frail and decaying tenure. Powis, who notwithstanding his avowed disapprobation of "the East India Bill," and his invincible repugnance to the "Coalition," did not the less condemn and oppose the formation of the new Administration, as wholly subversive of the dignity and inherent rights of the Lower House of Parliament; rising in his place, originated another effort for compelling the King to dismiss the First Lord of the Treasury. A most animated, long, and acrimonious Debate ensued, terminated in favour of Opposition, at a very late hour of the Morning, after two Divisions, both which Fox carried; the first, by a Majority of *twenty*; the last by *twenty-one*. The Address voted, was ordered to be presented by the whole House. But, this Triumph, however apparently gratifying, might be considered rather as nominal, than real; not extending in fact beyond the threshold of the Lobby, and being neither calculated to intimidate the Sovereign, nor to accelerate the First Minister's resignation.

I have never witnessed greater oratorical exertions made by Fox, than on that Evening. In a speech of prodigious length, which might

be said to try the patience of the House, he endeavoured to concentrate every Argument, and to exhaust every topic of Declamation. But, his Antagonist, elevated by the victories obtained without doors, in various Towns and Counties; as well as nearer home, at Hackney, where the Freeholders of Middlesex had been convened; and above all in Westminster itself, where Fox had just received the most unequivocal marks of the disapprobation, or rather indignation, of his own Constituents; — elated by his consciousness of these advantages, Pitt, with far more brevity, but in a higher tone than he had ever yet assumed, retorted on his adversary with inconceivable severity. After exposing to derision, the inconsistence of his present conduct in becoming the Champion of a small Majority of the House of Commons, instead of constituting the distinguished organ of the popular voice, as he once was; and complimenting him on the dexterity with which he supported in turn the most opposite political Characters; Pitt justified himself from the charge of imposture in representing to the Nation, the pernicious consequences to the Constitution, that must have resulted from "the East India Bill." Then descending to

personal objects, "the Right Honorable Gen-"tleman," said he, "calls me a mere nomi-"nal Minister, the Puppet of Secret Influ-"ence. It is because I disdain to become "*his* puppet, by resigning my Office, that he "thus denominates me. But, his contemp-"tuous expressions shall never provoke me "to resignation. My own honour and re-"putation I never will resign, to place my-"self under his protection, to accept a nomi-"nation from him, and thereby to become a "poor, powerless, self-condemned, unprofit-"able Minister in his train: a Minister, ser-"viceable to him perhaps, but altogether in-"capable of serving my King, or my Country." He concluded by levelling the severest reproaches on Fox, for stopping, or as the Opposition termed it, suspending and postponing the Supplies; thus sacrificing the public interests, to private Animosity or Ambition. No reply was made to this eloquent Harangue, which seemed finally to extinguish all the fallacious hopes so long nourished by sanguine or credulous individuals, of beholding an Administration founded on a broad Basis. It became evident that no intentions of such a nature were seriously cherished or encouraged; and that one of the two contending

parties must ultimately sink under the superiority of his Opponent.

21st—27th February.] Already Fox's Majority began to exhibit symptoms of rapid decay. While some Members abandoned the "Coalition," in deference to the public voice, or to the remonstrances of their immediate Constituents; others yielded to suggestions of a personal or interested nature, and withdrew from a sinking party, whose approaching extinction they anticipated. These latter individuals drew on themselves the bitterest sarcasms for their desertion, not only from Fox, but, at different times, from various Members of the Opposition. The King's Answer to the last Address, drawn up with consummate skill, gracious in its language, conciliating in its professions, declaring how anxiously His Majesty desired to form "a firm, efficient, "extended, and united Administration;" but, lamenting the inefficiency of his efforts for that purpose; denying that it would be advanced or facilitated by the previous dismission of his Ministers, against whom no charge or complaint was preferred; observing that numbers of his Subjects had expressed

their satisfaction at the late change in his Councils; and finally declining to vacate the essential Offices of executive Government, till he should see a prospect of such a union as his faithful Commons recommended:—this reply augmented the embarrassments, while it added to the dismay of the "Coalition" Leaders.

On the Question being agitated, of adjourning its Consideration for two or three Days; after a short Debate, Fox found himself indeed still in a Majority: but it consisted only of *seven*, though near three hundred and fifty Members voted. He made nevertheless, on the first Day of the ensuing Month, when the Royal Answer was read, another desperate attempt to carry the trenches by storm, and sustained it by his accustomed display of Eloquence. The Debates themselves had however ceased to excite the same interest, or to awaken the same attention, as they had produced in earlier stages of the contest. Yet in a very full House, falling little short of four hundred, the Opposition maintained their superiority, and even rose to *twelve*. Another Address was voted; but though it still besought the

Sovereign "to lay the foundation of a strong "and stable Government, by the previous "removal of his present Ministers;" it lamented "the failure of his endeavours for "forming an united Administration; and "their concern, as well as disappointment, "at His Majesty's not having been advised "to take any further steps for effecting the "object." It was impossible more clearly to admit their inability to dictate to the Crown, and their desire of dividing with Pitt the power, of which it had become evidently impracticable wholly to deprive him.

4th and 5th March.] In his Answer to their Address, the King nearly repeated his preceding Declaration; only subjoining, that "he did not consider the failure of his recent "endeavours to form an extended and united "Administration, as constituting a final bar "to its accomplishment, if it could have "been obtained on principles of fairness and "equality." But, as though he had been desirous at the same time, of extinguishing any such expectations, he added, "I know of no "farther steps that I can take, that are likely "to remove the difficulties that obstruct that "desirable end." Fox, who beheld as in a

mirror, the sentence of his perpetual exclusion from Office, conveyed under these expressions of the Sovereign; after first postponing the Consideration of His Majesty's reply for four Days, endeavoured to throw an insurmountable barrier in the way of Dissolution, by delaying the progress of the Mutiny Bill through the House. An animated Debate ensued on the subject; in which, while the two Leaders took only a comparatively inferior share, Lord North spoke at considerable length, and with great ability. Under the possible anticipation that the Majority might prevent the Mutiny Bill from passing, opinions had been hazarded from the Ministerial Benches, that even though that annual Act should be suffered to expire, yet the King might keep the Army together, both the Men, and the Money for their payment, being already voted. When therefore the consent of the House of Peers should be obtained, the Crown, it was asserted, might have an Army, with the recognized approbation of Parliament. This Doctrine, which, it must be confessed, was not to be found in "the "Bill of Rights;" and which might, in its effects, have proved subversive of the British Constitution; received, it is true, no direct

sanction from Pitt: but it did not the less provoke and produce from various quarters, the severest animadversion. Lord North observed, that " such a discovery, if founded in Law, " might well make every man tremble for " his Liberty. But, those who maintained it, " must likewise assert that the Army might " be kept together without discipline, and " without punishment; the first being only " enforced, and the latter only inflicted, " under the Mutiny Act." He concluded by reminding Ministers, " that notwithstanding " the money had been *voted* for the payment " of the Army, yet until the Act specifically " *appropriating* it to that branch of service " had passed, no power or right existed in " Administration, to issue any sum, however " small, for the purpose." Finally he warned them, that " as a Prorogation or Dissolution " does away every Vote of Supply, not previously carried into an Act of Parliament; " if therefore the Minister should have recourse to such a Measure, the Votes of " Army, Navy, Ordnance, and Supply of " every kind, must instantly be destroyed " and fall to the ground." No Answer was made or attempted from the Treasury Bench, to these Denunciations, which did not indeed

admit of any reply; and only served to shew the critical, as well as awful position of the Country, left without a Government, and apparently on the verge of a suspension or extinction of all its Establishments.

Powis and Marsham, who commonly acted in concert, uniting their efforts on this occasion, attacked the Minister in language of equal energy and acrimony. The former, after expressing his amazement at the King's Answer, and wishing for time to shed a tear over the expiring dignity of the House of Commons; lamented that Administration appeared to be determined on prosecuting their mad career, and on elevating Prerogative above Privilege. Marsham reiterated the same sentiments, while he protested that no Act could be more remote from his intention, than to delay the public business, or to plunge the Country into confusion. Rigby, who had been called on by the Attorney General, only a few days before, to pay into the Exchequer, the vast Balances of public money remaining in his hands; a demand of which he loudly complained, as harsh and illiberal, though he could not venture directly to oppose or resist it; came forward very conspicuously

in the course of the Debate. With that blunt, bold, dictatorial, and coarse Style of Oratory, which always characterized him, but of which, since the extinction of Lord North's Government, he had exhibited very few Specimens; he reprobated the *Audacity* of a Minister who presumed to remain in Office, with a Majority of the House of Commons against him: observing, that it was reserved for the present days to produce a Chancellor of the Exchequer who said to Parliament, "I care not for your Majority. "The King has appointed me, and you have "nothing to do with the business." He finished by declaring, that his Blood boiled with indignation, at the bare mention of retaining an Army without a Mutiny Bill. Pitt did not condescend to notice these personal Sarcasms or Animadversions, which, he well knew, however they might operate within the Walls of the Assembly where they were pronounced, would produce no injurious consequences to him among the People without Doors. On the Division for adjourning the Committee upon the Mutiny Bill, he was again left in a Minority of *nine*; the numbers being 171 against 162; Fox still retaining his slender possession of the House.

8th March.] But the termination of this great Conflict, on which not only England, but all Europe had their eyes fixed, and which had already lasted near eleven Weeks, to the suspension of every kind of public Business, could not be longer protracted by any efforts of eloquence. The King, in terms of gracious, yet firm determination, had twice refused to comply with the demand of a Majority of the Lower House; and that Majority was become not less odious to the People, than hostile to the Crown or Administration. So unnatural a state of things, carried in its essence the seeds of its speedy extinction. Fox though apparently Master of the House, found himself unable to advance; and he could not remain stationary without exposing his Party to ridicule, while they were silently undermined from day to day. His embarrassments, which did not admit of concealment, necessarily augmented the confidence of his ministerial Adversaries. Nor did he attempt to disguise them, when the consideration of His Majesty's Answer to the last Address, came before the House. In terms of querulous indignation, he stigmatised the Reply, as a compound of Contradiction, Duplicity, Insult, and Violation of

the British Constitution. Having attempted to justify and defend the right of the Commons to demand the removal of Ministers, without stating their reasons, or assigning any specific cause for such dismission; he avowed that the only becoming Measure now left, was to move a Resolution, that "whoever "should advise His Majesty to continue his "present Administration, was an Enemy to "his Country." But, however disposed and desirous he might be to proceed to this Act, he was restrained by his consciousness that he could not carry with him even a Majority of the most limited description, if he made the attempt. Many of his Adherents had already announced to him their determination to proceed no further, accompanied with menaces of withdrawing their support, if he tried so desperate an experiment. Thus situated, Fox stopped; and after loading Ministers with the bitterest reproaches, for having, as he asserted, overset the Country, involved public Credit in remediless confusion, suffered our foreign concerns to run to ruin, and incurred the guilt of leaving our East Indian Possessions a prey to every species of Enormity, Peculation, and Tyranny; he declared that it was not his intention to stop the Supplies. While he

charged Pitt with inordinate Ambition, as well as with having manifested a decided aversion to political union; he finished by only moving, not an Address, but a *Representation* to the King. It was long, expostulatory, argumentative, if not criminating; and recapitulated all the points, on which the Crown and the Commons had so obstinately contended: but it contained no new matter, except lamenting that "His Majesty's Advisers "had not thought fit to suggest any farther "steps for removing the difficulties which "impeded the formation of an extended Ad-"ministration."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer took little or no part in the Debate which ensued on that Evening. Dundas, however, supplied his place, with great acuteness, energy, and severity. Retorting on the Opposition, all the accusations of pursuing a mad and desperate career, to the subversion of the Constitution, whose true Principles they outraged, he endeavoured to shew that Fox's experience proved the incapacity of the House of Commons itself, however powerful a Branch of the Legislature it might be, to enforce its own unconstitutional Resolutions. He treated

the *Representation* as a Manifesto, calculated to delude the Nation, by disguising the real intention of Fox, which aimed at elevating the Speaker's Mace above the Royal Sceptre, and giving virtually to the Representatives of the People, the Right of naming Ministers. Towards the conclusion of his able Harangue, after vindicating Pitt from the imputation of opposing a union of Parties, if it could have been effected on fair and honourable Principles; he alluded with great force, though guardedly and hypothetically, to the well authenticated lists of Peerages, Offices, and Emoluments, known to be promised to their Adherents, by the Opposition Leaders, who thus condescended to avail themselves of every engine of seduction or corruption: engines, by which, it was obvious, the Country might be as completely enslaved, and the Constitution subverted, as by the worst Minion of the most wicked, or arbitrary Monarch. Burke, who, ever since the rejection of "the "East India Bill," as if overcome by his second dismission from the Pay Office, had scarcely once risen in the House, or taken his accustomed share in the Discussions within its Walls; made ample amends on that night, for his preceding silence. He spoke with

great animation, and with equal Eloquence: but no exertions could sustain a declining Party, or infuse new vigour into its component Members. Even the subject of controversy itself, agitated and exhausted by so many repetitions, no longer inspired the same interest; the greatest ingenuity being scarcely able to suggest any new ideas, or to strike out any fresh matter of argument. Uncommon anxiety was manifested, and impatience displayed, for the Division, which took place about Midnight; when Fox's Majority became reduced to *one* solitary Vote, the numbers on each side considerably exceeding those on the Division of the 5th of March. Three hundred and eighty-five Members were present, of whom 191 divided with Opposition, and 190 with Administration. Great exultation was expressed by the ministerial side of the House, while corresponding depression appeared on the opposite Benches, at so decisive a proof of the approaching fall of the "Coalition."

9th March.] The Spell which had so long suspended and paralysed all the functions of Government, was now dissolved; and on the ensuing day, the Mutiny Bill, no longer

opposed, passed through the Committee. Fox, divested of that controul which he had exercised over the Assembly ever since it met in November, appeared there; but, "shorn of his Beams:" nor can we consider the Discussions which subsequently arose on various points, as other than mere Conversations, since no Division was ever again attempted, down to the period of the Prorogation and Dissolution of Parliament. Yet scarcely any Debate which took place during the interesting Session under our review, opened more curious matter of speculation or of controversy, than the one that followed Fox's defeat. Powis and Marsham, who had taken so conspicuous a part throughout the whole contest, appeared for the last time on the Theatre. The former, in a Speech replete with pointed animadversions, and conceived with great powers of mind, endeavoured, while he justified himself from the charge of inconsistency in his conduct, to throw on Pitt the accusation of duplicity, in his pretended negociation for forming an extended Administration. He admitted that the House of Commons was conquered; "for "though scarcely a Century had elapsed, "since a Vote of the Commons could be-

" stow a Crown, it could not, in 1784 pro-
" cure the dismission of a Minister." Having related, with apparent exactitude, the leading points on which had hinged the attempt to produce an interview between the Duke of Portland and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as forming the first indispensable step towards union; he hesitated not to declare, that " all the concession was on one side,
" while the Minister refused either explana-
" tion, or the smallest advance leading to con-
" ciliation." Pitt made, it is true, a prompt, able, and animated reply to this imputation: but I will fairly own that it impressed me as more rhetorical than solid, and carried with it no conviction; though the reasons assigned by him for the rupture of the proposed Conference, if not severely scrutinized, appeared specious and reasonable to the Ear.

Those persons who best knew the secret Springs of Affairs, at the period under our review, have, I believe, felt, and some of them, have candidly avowed, that the First Minister could not sincerely desire, or even mean, to form a Coalition with Fox. Nor, if he had wished it, can we easily conceive on what Basis it could have reposed, that offered a

prospect of completion, and still less of duration. The Cabinet must have preponderated in favour of one, or of the other, Candidate for power. And which of them would have submitted to become the subordinate? When Lord North struck his Bargain with the Rockingham Party, he consented to act under them a secondary part; receiving in compensation, a share of the ministerial Spoils, and obtaining from them protection against Impeachment, for the errors or calamities of the American War. The motives therefore for his conduct, were obvious, natural, venial, perhaps justifiable in every sense. Lord North did not demand to be received among his New Allies, "on fair and equal terms." He exacted only Indemnity, Oblivion, and a Participation of Offices. But Pitt must have begun, like Sylla in Antiquity, or like Fairfax in our own History, by laying down his power, at a moment too when he had nearly consolidated it. Other motives for avoiding such a connexion with Fox, would unquestionably suggest themselves to his mind. The late Secretary of State was no longer an object either of popular affection, or of Royal Apprehension. His own imprudence, Ambition, and rapacious policy, had precipitated

him from his double elevation. Nor could the Minister have formed a junction with the Colleague of Lord North, the author in his own Person of the "East India Bill," without perhaps incurring some degree of political condemnation, if not of moral contamination or censure. Fox, indeed, might, and probably would, have consented to modify that obnoxious Measure, in a way to render it harmless to the Constitution. But experience of the bitter fruits produced by the late "Coalition," held out no encouragement to Pitt for concluding a second similar union. He stood moreover on far higher ground than his Antagonist; combining at once the favour of the Sovereign, the attachment of the People, and the command of the House of Peers. How is it to be supposed that he would voluntarily descend from such a situation, and consent to mingle his future fortunes in some measure with a Man, whose line of public action he had stigmatized with the severest Epithets; merely to conciliate the suffrages of the Gentlemen who met at the St. Alban's Tavern? These reflections may probably induce us to believe, that neither George the Third, nor his Minister, could really intend to replace Fox in any

degree on the Eminence from which he had fallen; though during the progress of a contest, in which he remained, for many successive weeks, Master of a Majority in the House of Commons, Deference towards that Branch of the Legislature, dictated an apparent compliance with their anxious wishes.

Pitt, with great ability, in the course of his reply to Powis, probably conscious that he could not altogether disprove, however he might deny or repel, the charge of insincerity, contrived to bring forward a counter accusation against him and Marsham; to both of whom he indirectly applied the Appellation of "a Spy," as having obtained by a pretended impartiality, access to the secrets of the two contending Parties. They took fire at the term; and after respectively vindicating themselves from so dishonourable an imputation, Marsham read in his place, the Letter addressed by the Duke of Portland to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It served fully to prove that the Chief of the Opposition Party, as anxiously desired to commence a Negociation with the First Minister, as the latter dexterously eluded and avoided a Con-

ference. Marsham professed his own perfect conviction of the fact. So did Fox himself, who spoke with his usual ability, though not in the commanding tone that had characterized him, when conscious that he could dictate his pleasure to an obsequious Majority. With more bitterness than was natural to him, he felicitated his rival on "having attained "to something like a Majority to support "him;" nor did he spare his severest animadversions on those individuals, who having long voted with Opposition, had recently changed sides, and joined the Administration. Fox concluded by pointing out the delusion of Pitt's proposition to treat on "equal terms," while he rejected the offer made by the Duke of Portland, that the Ministerial Arrangement should be conducted "with attention to prin-"ciples of equity and fairness." There could remain no doubt in the mind of any impartial person, that the expressions "fair and equal," were in themselves ambiguous, and understood in different or opposite senses, by the two contending parties. But these recriminations, however they might for a moment agitate the minds of men, no longer impeded the progress of public Business; the

House voting on the ensuing Evening, the Extraordinaries of the Navy, without a Division.

11th March — 22d.] It became indeed more and more apparent from day to day, that Pitt's Machinery being now nearly complete, a Dissolution of Parliament would not be long delayed. Yet, the Opposition still fondly indulged a hope; for, it did not amount to a belief; that, as no Act of Appropriation had passed, though the Supplies were voted, Ministers would not dare to apply the public Money to specific purposes, contrary to all precedent, if not to law; and in direct violation of the Prohibitions of the House. Various attempts were made to sound the Minister on this delicate point, but, without effect. Fox took however no personal part in them; and though he occasionally attended in his place, I believe he hardly, if ever, spoke on any subject, during the last eleven or twelve Days that Parliament continued in existence. Burke remained equally mute; while Powis and Marsham, engaged in Preparations for an approaching general Election, disappeared altogether from a scene, where they had recently performed the prin-

cipal Characters. The little degree of opposition experienced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, arose from the Adherents of Lord North, or was made by that Nobleman himself. Sir Grey Cooper, on the Order of the Day being moved, for going into a Committee of Supply, on the Estimates for the Extraordinaries of the Army; conscious that it offered the last occasion which would present itself, for protesting against a Dissolution; expatiated with considerable energy, on the Infraction of the Constitution that would arise from such a Measure. He at the same time warned the Ministers, that "to issue money for the "pay of the Forces, contrary to a Resolution "of the House, declaring such an Act to be "a high Crime and Misdemeanour, and with-"out any Appropriation Act," was not only illegal, but, a subversion of the very tenure by which the King held his Crown. No answer whatever was returned to these denunciations, from the Treasury Bench; but the Supply being voted in the Committee, without any Division, the House adjourned to the following Day.

23d March.] As the immediate Dissolution

of Parliament had now become matter of universal notoriety, and preparations for carrying it into effect were already making in the Public Offices; a considerable attendance was produced in the Lower House, by curiosity to witness its extinction, rather than by any other Motive. The First Minister appearing in his place, was assailed from various quarters, on the question being put by the Speaker, that "the Report on the Army Extraordinaries, should be read a First Time." Mr. Eden led the way, and was followed by Lord North, as well as by General Conway. While each of them avowed that they considered themselves as addressing for the last time, an Assembly, which they knew was on the point of being dissolved; they did not remonstrate or menace in less animated terms, on the supposition that such a measure should be actually carried into execution. Every argument adduced in the preceding Debate, was reiterated, pressed, and urged with augmented force of language. The Chancellor of the Exchequer remaining nevertheless contumeliously silent, the Report was read: but on a Motion being made for the Second Reading, Lord North once more rose; and after some Expostulations relative to the con-

temptuous treatment experienc d by the House upon the present occasion, demanded, "on "what principle of Law, on what doctrine re-"specting the Constitution, on what argu-"ment, or on what authority, when Par-"liament should be dissolved, would Minis-"ters presume to issue Money for the Sub-"sistence of the Army?"

Pitt had not however advanced so far, to be now deterred from consummating his triumph, by the impotent threats of a powerless and exhausted, as well as an unpopular Faction. He cut the knot, which he was unable to untye; declined any discussion of those great constitutional points which he could not solve, and the infraction of which he could not abstractedly justify; and confidently trusted to the universal sentiment of national Approbation, for covering any deviation from Parliamentary usage. Like Iago, who in reply to every Enquiry, answers,

"Ask me no questions: what you know, you know;"

he briefly observed, that "Gentlemen might "make whatever Speeches they chose, and "the House might act as it thought proper;

"he would not say one word upon the sub-"ject." The Report being then read a second time, the House adjourned, and was summoned on the following Day, to attend the House of Peers; where the King having prorogued the Parliament, after pronouncing a short, but judicious Speech from the Throne, well calculated for the Emergency, stated it to be a "duty which he owed to the Constitution and "the Country, under its actual circumstances, "to recur as speedily as possible, to the sense "of his People, by convoking a new Par-"liament." A Dissolution followed within twenty-four Hours; and the "Coalition," confounded, as well as overwhelmed, amidst the storm which they had injudiciously excited, disappeared in an instant, leaving the fragments of their political Greatness scattered in all directions.

25th March.] I have related these Events, as they passed under my own Eyes, with the most rigid impartiality. And if I have dwelt minutely on the Transactions or Debates that took place in the House of Commons, during the contest between Fox and Pitt; it must be remembered, that within the walls of that Assembly, the History and the very Exist-

ence of the Country, were concentrated during more than three Months. We would vainly seek them elsewhere. All the functions of Government stood still: while the Sovereign, the Peers, and the Nation looked on, expecting the issue of so extraordinary a conflict, which must necessarily impress a new character on the opening year. Never did any King of Great Britain contend for so vast a stake, since Charles the First! In contemplating the scene, Mr. Pitt arrests our first attention.

Nothing in the History of this Country, subsequent to the Accession of the House of Brunswic, bore any Analogy to his position. When we consider that he struggled against a Majority of the House of Commons, conducted by such Talents as those of Fox, from the 19th of December, 1783, up to the 9th of March, 1784; on any Day of which interval, he might possibly have been impeached: and if we reflect that he vanquished so vast a combination of Party, without prematurely recurring to a Dissolution, till all his necessary arrangements of every kind were completed, and the whole Nation had declared on his side; we shall probably admit, that, as no such instance occurs be-

fore him, no similar example will probably ever be again exhibited. If in compliance with Lord Temple's opinion, he had begun by dissolving the Parliament as soon as he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, in December, 1783; when the People at large, and when even the Inhabitants of London, as well as of Westminster, were imperfectly informed on the nature and tendency of "the "East India Bill;" it is possible that a very different result might have been the consequence.

Fox's defeat arose from one fundamental error or miscalculation, into which he was nevertheless led by the experience of all parliamentary contest; namely, that a Majority of the House of Commons, could compel the Crown to dismiss its Ministers, or could oblige the Ministers themselves to give in their own resignation. In his hands, this constitutional weapon, hitherto irresistible, lost its edge, and became harmless. He attributed its failure to a spirit of Delusion, which, as he asserted, and as his Adherents maintained, had incapacitated the British People to distinguish truth from error, imposture from reality. There is, however, no Sophistry capable of

blinding completely a whole Nation, upon points so level to every understanding; and if there existed any Delusion in the estimate formed by the Country, respecting the nature and tendency of "the East India Bill," the Delusion still survives at this day, in all its force. But, there existed another Delusion into which Fox himself fell, when he erroneously conceived, that a Majority of the Lower House, in whatever manner acquired, and whatever measures or objects it might pursue, must necessarily dictate its pleasure to the Sovereign, to the House of Peers, and to the Public. The two former, would, indeed, if unsupported by the Body of the People of England, have been found only dust in the Balance, when engaged in a struggle with the genuine Representatives of that People, the real organs of their will and opinion. Charles the First, and James the Second, each, made the experiment; by which the former lost his Head, and the latter, his Crown. But, George the Third, neither attempted to exercise oppressive and antiquated, if not illegal Prerogatives; nor to impose on us a Religion prohibited by Law, and odious to his Subjects. And never did the British Constitution manifest its latent Energies so strongly, as in the

very Act of arresting that Assembly, which, calling itself the Representatives of the Nation, became in the instance before us, the instruments of the Ambition of a Faction, or rather, of an individual.

The steadiness, the principles, and the repugnance of the King towards the "Coali-"tion," operated as powerful secondary agents; but they were not primary causes. Fox, attentive only to the three Branches of the Constitution, which he considered as omnipotent, regarded as null the Nation itself. But, when awakened, roused, and informed, the People hurled him in an instant from his situation. For, it was not the Dissolution of Parliament, which would have reduced him and his Party to insignificance, if the public opinion and confidence had accompanied him. Of this truth, a great example was exhibited in 1780, when Lord North dissolved the Parliament. The Government was not idle on the occasion, and a large sum was expended in endeavours to procure favourable returns to the new House of Commons. Yet so unpopular was the Sovereign, so weak the Administration, and so odious the American War, that the First Minister derived little

permanent strength or advantage from the Measure. He held out with difficulty for one Session, and surrendered early in the next, on the 20th of March, 1782. Fox, on the contrary, remained for many years, only an illustrious victim of his inordinate Ambition, seated on the Opposition Bench; till the memorable Malady of His Majesty in 1788, recalled him for a moment into Day, only to plunge him deservedly anew into greater political Depression.

The obligations which the King owed to Pitt, for liberating him from the Chains of the "Coalition," at the time when they were about to have been rivetted, were certainly of the first magnitude. No other Subject in his Dominions, would probably have attempted, but assuredly no other individual would have successfully performed, so important and arduous a service. After witnessing the formation and extinction of three Administrations, within the space of little more than twenty Months, George the Third beheld in prospect, domestic tranquillity, personal freedom, and national prosperity. Nor were these the only benefits that resulted to him, from the events that we have related. All the errors and

misfortunes of his Reign, seemed to be swallowed up and forgotten, in the Grave of the "Coalition." The odium of Lord Bute's Ministry, and the Peace of 1763, aggravated by the prosecution of Wilkes; the humiliating Negociation and Compromise relative to Falkland Islands, which the pen of "Junius" had consigned to perpetual reprobation; lastly, the disgraces of the American War, followed by the loss of an Empire beyond the Atlantic, for which national defalcation of Power and Territory, the King was regarded by a large portion of his Subjects, as peculiarly responsible;—the accumulated evils of three and twenty years, disappeared at once, and were obliterated. Only the Virtues of the Sovereign seemed to survive in the memory of his People. The same Prince, who, in March, 1782, laboured under a load of prejudice and unpopularity; was considered, in March, 1784, as the Guardian of the Constitution, worthy the warmest testimonies of Affection, Gratitude, and Respect. They poured in upon him from all quarters, acknowledging the Blessings of his paternal Government, and approving the recent Interference of his Prerogative, for the Destruction of an unprincipled Faction. Wilkes, who had

been among the most ardent opposers of "the East India Bill," and among the foremost supporters of Pitt in Parliament, as Member for Middlesex; re-appeared at St. James's, where he met with the most gracious reception. A new order of Events, and a new Æra, seemed to commence from this auspicious date. In fact, if we would point out the period of time, from the commencement of this long, as well as eventful Reign, during which the Sovereign and the Country equally enjoyed most felicity; we should not hesitate to name the interval, comprising about four years and a half, that succeeded Pitt's triumph over Fox, in the Spring of 1784, down to the King's severe seizure, in the Autumn of 1788. Here, therefore, as at a Political Land Mark, I shall conclude the Second Part of the Historical Memoirs of my own Time.

FINIS.

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